ANCIENT RUHUNA

Sri Lankan–German Archaeological Project in the Southern Province

Volume 1

Editors

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THE GODAVAYA HARBOUR SITE – REPORT ON THE 1994–1997 EXCAVATIONS

In 1992 the Archaeological Department of Sri Lanka and KAVA started cooperative excavations in the Southern Province in Mahagama, now called Tissamaharama, the former capital of the kingdom of Ruhuna, whereas the activities of Bonn University since 1994 have centred around the ancient coastal settlement of Godavaya (fig. 205).

The Selection of the Excavation Site

Research literature unanimously places the ancient harbour of royal Mahagama in the coastal town Kirinda, situated only a few kilometres to the south at the Kirindi Oya. The possibility of another site as port has only been considered occasionally. The organization of the first excavation campaigns involved the investigation of several coastal dwellings and villages in the south of Sri Lanka related to the kingdom of Ruhuna. Among them were Kirinda and Godavaya, about 10 km west of Hambantota in the Magam Pattu of the Hambantota District, close to the mouth of the Walawe Ganga. Godavaya was chosen in addition to its outstanding topographical situation and a significant inscription chiselled into the rock at the foot of the modern dagoba (fig. 250). The mention of the site in the *Mahavamsa*[1] as well as the occasional discovery of a late Roman hoard of coins 6 km to the north of the monastery[2] tipped the balance in its favour. Calling in mind Sri Lanka's role in the early East-West-trade activities sufficiently reveals Godavaya's special position and its significance for the entire south of the island.[3] Furthermore the importance of the Godavaya-Project was underscored by the fact, that Mantai-Mahatittha in the north of Sri Lanka was the only port of the island that had been partly excavated up to that point. On the one hand the Godavaya-Project aims at examining the interrelationship between the local monastery, the ancient settlement and the harbour mentioned in the inscription. On the other hand, it is also interested in discovering the economic links between Godavaya and the hinterland up to the Ridiyagama-Tank.

1 Geiger 1912, 255, (XXXV, 125).

2 The hoard probably consisted of several thousands of Roman and Indo-Roman coins in earthen vessels. A farmer discovered it on his land whilst extracting clay close to the monastery of Beragama, the parent monastery of Godavaya. In Sept. 1995 another hoard find from the Godavaya area was found and almost completely handed over to the Archaeological Department. Three ceramic pots (not yet examined) filled with antique coins were unearthed by agricultural workers to the east of the Kalametiva-Lunama-Wewa, about 8 km west of Godavaya. They are probably barbarizations of late Roman specimens. Based on the metal weight of 3.5 kg a total of 2800–3000 coins has been estimated. According to O. Bopearachchi "a hoard of Roman third brass" has been discovered at Godavaya, containing about 30.000 specimen. The author unfortunately gives no further details concerning this find: Bopearachchi 1996, 63.

3 Bandaranayake/Dewaraja/Silva/Wimalaratne (eds.) 1990; Cimino 1994; Kessler 1998; Robertson 1799; Roth 1980; 1997; 1998; Warmington 1974.

Fig. 205. Godavaya, Hambantota District, Sri Lanka: Geographical situation of the harbour (after Roth 1997). 1: Site of Roman, resp. Indoroman coin finds, 2: Monastic site.

The Geomorphological Conditions [4]

The southern coastal area of Sri Lanka between Dondra Point in the west and Kirinda in the east is influenced both by the north-east and the south-west monsoons. Today, the region is characterised by vast sand-bays that occasionally consist of massive dunes followed by brackish waters. At some places a belt of enormous sand-dunes blocks the entrance to the interior of the country. As U. Weerakkody expounds, a strong deposition of sands is generally to be expected along this part of the coast-line: "The southwest coast of Sri Lanka, for example, is eroding, and the materials from the beaches are deposited in the southeast coast where extensive depositional features-such as barrier chains, fossilised spits, bars and dunes-have developed." [5] Similar results were published by P. G. Cooray [6] and M. Domrœs [7]. Even periodically lost land, which may also involve the temporary destruction of the dune-front, is usually quickly restored.

South of Ambalantota, about 4 km west of Godavaya, the Walawe Ganga flows into the sea. Since the Walawe Ganga has an annual volume of over 2.200 million cubic m of water, it is the fourth biggest river of the country. Worth mentioning is its extremely high sand load [8]. Between its mouth and Godavaya the river expands in a lagoonal fashion. Underneath the monastery of Godavaya a massive sand-barrier prevents the Walawe Ganga from flowing into the sea (figs. 205–206). The present day mouth-area is blocked by a sand-barrier too. In

[4] Many thanks to J. Grunert, Department of Geography, University of Bonn. The following statements on the development of the coastal morphology are mainly based on his insights.

[5] Weerakkody 1988, 188.

[6] Cooray 1984, especially 300–301.

[7] Domroes 1976, 66.

[8] Cf. Swan 1983, 52, table 5.5. The sandload is in part also due to inland erosion, especially in the upland. Since the 1730s coffee and from the middle of the 19th century onwards tea plantations have particularly accelerated the erosive process: De Silva 1981, 167 f., 282 ff.

times of high water levels, the fields of the local farmers are prone to flooding. Thus, from time to time, they have to create an artificial outlet around the river mouth at Ambalantota in order to divert the danger. It is small wonder that the lagoonal expansion is in danger of silting up as a result of sedimentation.

The coastal development and the changes in the bed of the Walawe Ganga are of essential. U. Weerakkody's studies on the lagoonal system of the Kalametiya-Lunama and the Welipatanwila coast since the mid 1980s[9] support the picture painted above. "The sinuosity of the rivers suggests that the barrier and the present sea beach (. . .) have developed gradually; ultimately, the mouth of the streams have been cut off from the sea by barriers, which have shifted streams to the east. (. . .) The abandoned river outfalls crossing the barrier at several places suggest that the former lagoonal water had been debouched by many former outfalls during the sequential development"[10].

Along the coastal strip concerned many corresponding developments have already taken place: "The eastern pocket in the early embayment stage of the system was converted into a lagoon that was subsequently filled in by

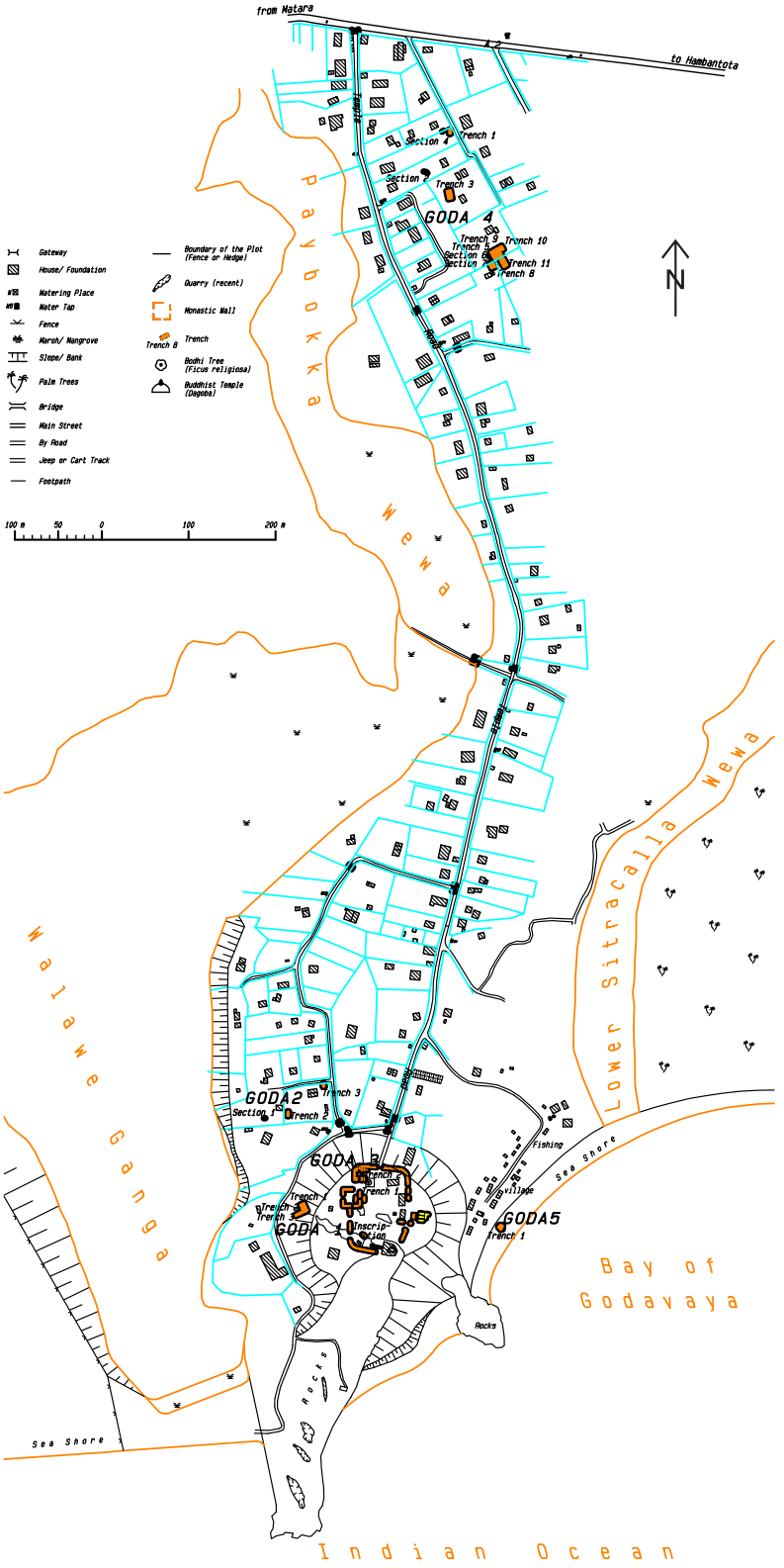


Fig. 206. Godavaya, Hambantota District/Southern Province, Sri Lanka.

[9] Weerakkody 1985.
[10] Weerakkody 1988, 193.

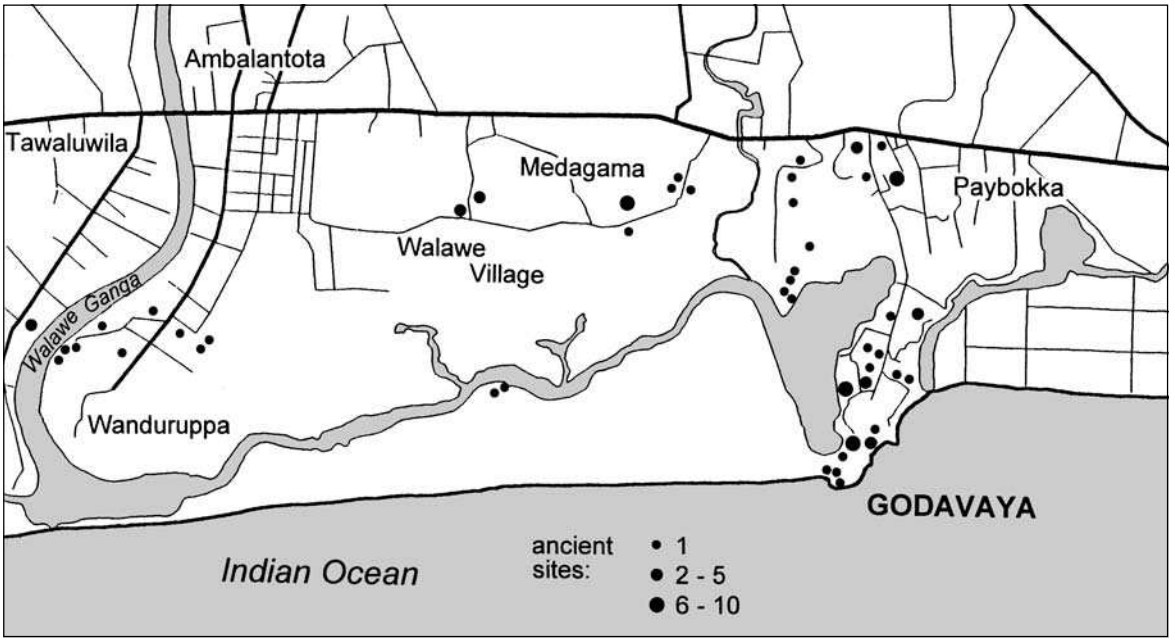


Fig. 207. Distribution of ancient sites in the Walawa Ganga mouth area, according to the results of the field-walking.

the alluvium brought by the streams. Many remnants of the abandoned courses of streams can still be observed in the field"[11]. An evaluation of old maps underlines the enormous littoral changes since the 16th century (see G. Recker in this volume). The strip of land behind the dune-belt is partly on or just a few metres above sea level. The adjoining hinterland, slightly sloping up and largely alluvial, is interspersed with numerous small lakes or lagoons. Upstream river traffic is possible to a limited extent on the Walawe Ganga. Even the rock barrier in the north of Ambalantota is not an insurmountable obstacle to native boats.

Summing up, geomorphological evidence suggests that west of Godavaya a completely different coast-line must have existed during the first few centuries of the first millennium. Archaeological insights support this view. The area between the Walawe Ganga in the west and Godavaya in the east was characterised by a large asynchronous bay. The areas higher up as well as the occasional rock-agglomerations to be found between the present-day coast and the lagoon may point towards smaller islands or rocks in the bay's surf. The large bay east of Godavaya Point is not influenced by any river and its sediments. Except for this, similar monsoonal effects are to be assumed for this bay. With reference to possible harbour sites both areas, west and east of the monastery possessed all the necessary requirements for a protected, natural port.

Archaeological Procedure

Since the area had not been surveyed extensively before[12], a comprehensive fieldwalking was undertaken in spring 1994 The main focus was placed on the coastal strip between the west of the recent mouth of the Walawe Ganga in the south of Ambalantota and the bay further east

[11] Ibid. 193.

[12] The excavation at the Girihandu Vihara near to the bridge of Ambalantota was undertaken by R. Silva in the 1960s. New excavations were conducted by B. Steinbring, H. Roth and W. Wijeyapala.

of Godavaya Point. The northern boundary of the area was marked off by the modern coast road A2. The monastic grounds and the recent site were carefully surveyed. In order to gain a firm work basis, probable sites had to be located, in addition to ascertaining how far these had already been destroyed or were in imminent danger of destruction by recent human interference above all by clay digging. Natural boundaries of the survey were a dense belt of mangroves along the lagoonal expanse of the Walawe Ganga as well as thick cactus undergrowth and hard-leafed shrubs extending over large parts of the area. Cultivated land was generally excluded from surveying, which, in view of the numerous rice-fields led to huge gaps in the archaeological pattern. A similar situation at the eastern border of the surveyed area results from extensive quarrying. From 1994 to 1996 an area of about 15 km² was covered in this way (fig. 207, survey areas I–XI). Areas temporarily marshy or flooded could also be explored because of the constantly changing climatic conditions. As already mentioned, dense growth and agriculture strongly reduced the sphere of intensive investigation covering only a maximum of 20% of the total area.

119 sites were located during the survey (fig. 207). In 118 cases the finds mainly included ceramics, which, according to a first examination, date from the 2nd/3rd centuries right up to the modern period. Only a relatively small number of black and red ware and of Polonnaruva Period (11th–13th century) pottery has been found on the surface of these sites. The distribution of the finds suggests that ancient settlements mainly occur in the eastern part of the projected area. Starting with Godavaya (survey areas I, II and III with 60 sites[13]), it describes a semicircle westwards (survey areas VI and VII with 30 find-spots). The western part of the project area (survey areas IX, X and XI with 28 sites) displays a diverse picture. The southern area east of the course of the river was most probably very thinly populated in the south (survey area IX-South with 9 sites). Large sterile sandbanks up to several m high were found around the river bend close to Wanduruppa. The access to most of the northern part (survey area IX-north) was impossible due to modern buildings. The archaeological substance of this area was largely destroyed by extensive clay-digging. Only few finds were made in the area directly to the west of the Walawe Ganga (survey areas X and XI with 19 find-spots), whereas no finds were discovered in the adjoining southern area near the coast. With the exception of two sites, the coastal area south of the actual course of the river showed no traces of settlement[14]. Since no sites were found east of Godavaya (survey area IV), it received no further attention[15]. Summing up, in the eastern bay area 90 sites were counted in contrast to the 28 western ones.

When the survey started, the lack of reliable area maps was keenly felt. This was fortunately changed in 1995, when a team led by B. Haselow surveyed and mapped the area of present-day Godavaya between the monastery and the coastal road A2 (fig. 206)[16]. Mr. K. W. Karunaratne, Superintendent of Surveys (District Survey Office Hambantota) variously supported our activities[17].

[13] According to local gem diggers they discovered once in a while several pieces of worked on wood and a number of pottery in survey area III. Except for a few number of pottery sherds none of the finds and their find spots could be located exactly.

[14] Both finds were made in a small, closely-defined area clearly elevated above its environment. Moreover, instead of the usual sands, completely different soil was observed, probably due to small islands formerly existent off the ancient shore. Cf. the section on coastal morphology in the paper by G. Recker in this volume. At one of the two sites Chinese ceramics dating to the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644) and Qing Dynasty (1644–1911) were found.

[15] According to villagers there is at least one find spot within the coconut garden, but it could not be located during the surveys.

[16] B. Haselow with U. Rübens and A. Scheel. The mapping scale was 1:2000. Some areas were in detail mapped to a larger scale. The fishermen's village and parts of the temple area have been mapped by O. Kessler, who carried out additional measurings in 1997.

[17] The authors wish to thank Mr. K. W. Karunaratne and his stuff.

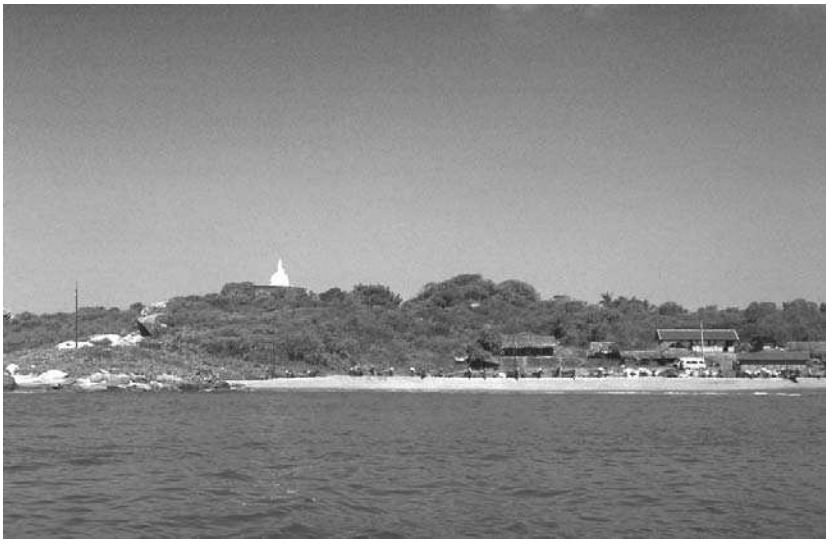


Fig. 208. Dagoba and harbour of Godavaya from the South.

The Monastery Complex

Following the coast-line from Hambantota further west for about 10 km, a striking land-mark consisting of a huge gneiss massif reaching far into the sea, meets the eye. Above its ridge the dagoba of the monastery of Godavaya is situated (fig. 208). The topography of the monastery is dominated by the above mentioned gneiss massif slanting in an angle of about 30° over the sea, then disappearing into the more or less flat countryside. The area between the adjoining huge granite blocks is taken up by small patches of land with several modern buildings belonging to the present Buddhist temple Gotha Prabbatha Rajamaha Viharaya including a restored dagoba and a modern imagehouse and a bodhigara[18]. Next to this buildings remains of the ancient imagehouse *(buduge)*, a chapterhouse *(banamaduva)* as well as architectural structures of a third building are preserved. In ancient times the monastery has been surrounded by a monastic wall.

The inscription mentioned was found at the front of the rock north-west of the restored dagoba. On top of this rock a modern cistern has been built recently (fig. 206; 250). The chiselled document, which was originally discovered by E. R. Ayrton, dates back to the 2nd century and demonstrates that Godavaya was an ancient port. In spring 1995, the two-liner[19] was traced by the Archaeological Department and subsequently covered again with sand to protect it from weathering. The text according to Paranavitana[20] and a new reading is discussed by H. Falk in this volume.

The king's name Gamani Abhaya can be identified as King Gajabahu I (114–136). The name Godapavata appears as Godava in later sources which corresponds to modern Godavaya[21]. Consequently, the harbour and monastery of Godavaya must have existed at the latest since the 2nd century, acknowledged and privileged by royalty.

GODA 3

Owing to the co-operation of Reverend Beragama Sumanasiri, chief priest of the monastery, it was possible to examine the remains of 2 of these 3 historical buildings on an overall area

[18] According to records of the Archaeological Department the Dagoba was restored on its ancient remains about 1900 and in 1944/54. Kessler 2000, 100f., No. 3, 120f., No. 53.

[19] It is listed in the Register of Inscriptions of the Archaeological Department as No. 586.

[20] Paranavitana 1983, 101, No. 67.

[21] Cf. Paranavitana 1983, 101, No. 67, especially note 3.

Fig. 209. Artificial hill with remains of the imagehouse (buduge) from west.

Fig. 210. GODA 3, trench 1, planum 3.

of 86 m² as well as the remains of the ancient monastic wall (fig. 206)[22].

The Imagehouse

The *Buduge* (imagehouse) occupies a markedly elevated position on the monastic grounds, steeply sloping downwards several metres to the west and north (fig. 209). Although archaeological evidence is lacking so far, parts of the area were probably elevated artificially. Parts of the enclosure are still visible as well as the stairway which led up to the entrance in the middle of the east-side of the building (fig. 210). Especially the eastern and northern sections of the enclosure are well preserved. It consists of flat stone slabs, originally raised in a vertical position, which show up 1 m above the recent surface. The sloping position today, slanting outwards up to 65°, results from the enormous internal pressure. At the first viewing of the site

[22] We would like to thank Reverend Beragama Sumanasiri for his help and hospitality.

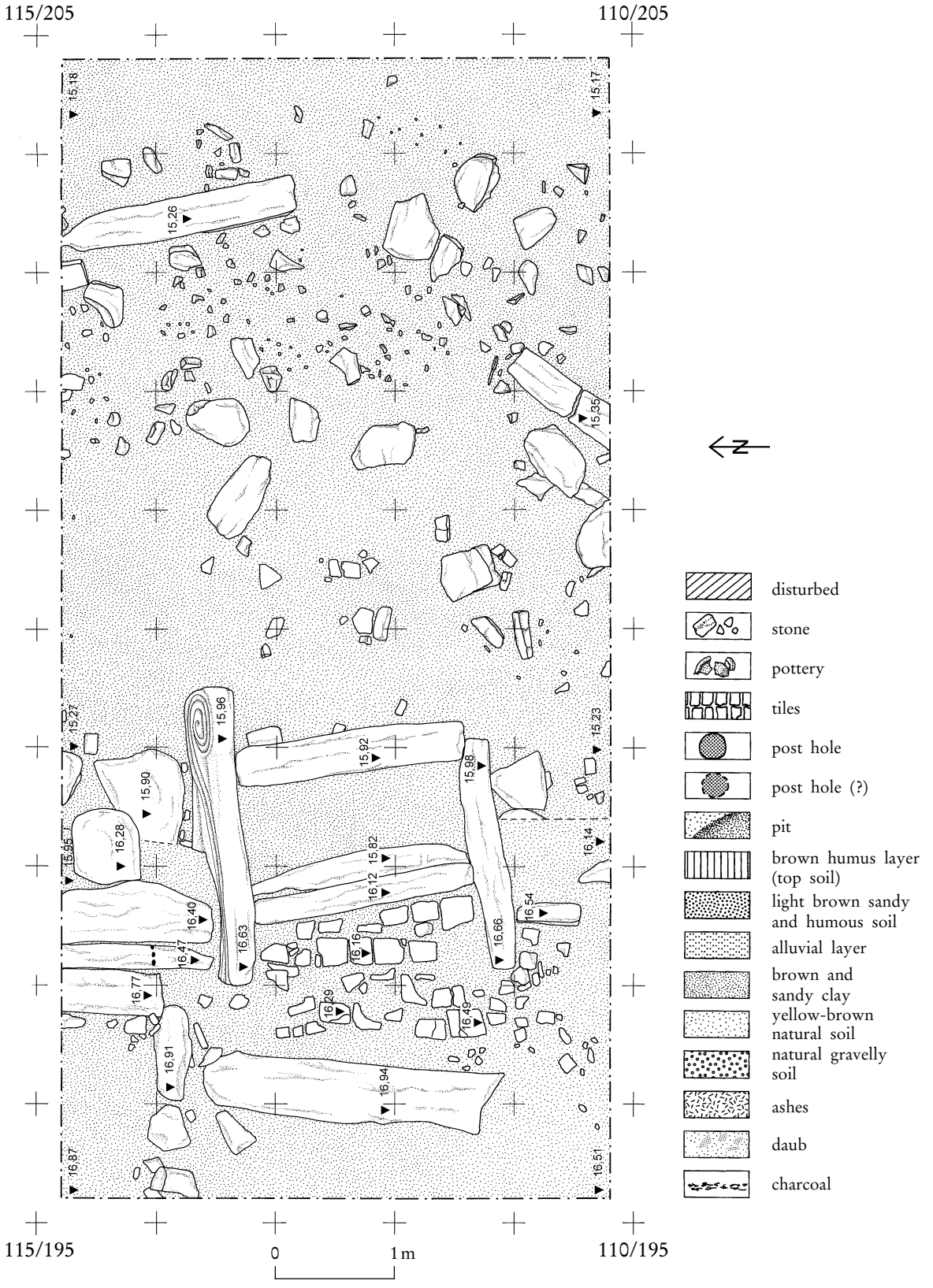


Fig. 211. GODA 3, trench 1, planum 2.

Fig. 212. GODA 3, trench 1, northern stringer.

marble fragments – neck, shoulder and chest – of a larger than life-size standing Buddha image were found scattered over the hillock. Both feet are preserved up to the ankles in an intact round base. All fragments were collected and laid down in the centre of the imagehouse. Because of the fact that all of them are strongly weathered a shelter was outlined to protect them from further destruction.

The archaeological activities focus around the centre part of the eastern enclosure of the image house. A 5 m × 10 m trench was opened (trench 1), thus encompassing smaller parts of the eastern enclosure as well as the stepped entrance (figs. 210–211). A stairway of three steps *(padipela)* of an overall internal width of 2.80–3.00 m was uncovered in front of the enclosure (fig. 211). The steps were made of oblong stone-blocks (L × W × H: 1.90–2.00 m × 0.30–0.40 m × 0.30–0.40 m). Only one of them was discovered lying essentially in its original position; the second one had slightly subsided to the north as well as moving over to the east, while the third step lay further away from the stairway in an eastward position about 0.20–0.40 m deep. The stringers to the right and left were decorated with a spiralled pattern (figs. 211–212), and their curved shape may represent a rolled-up elephant-trunk taking patterns from the "*Makara*-type"[23]. The upper parts, partly visible above the ground, are badly weathered. The southern stringer is damaged, its spiral-shaped front piece being broken off (figs. 211; 213). Both stringers, originally placed in a perpendicular position, slope towards the middle of the stairs. The moonstone *(patika or sandakaka pahana)* originally placed at the bottom of the stairs, was found moved to the east by several metres in planum 3 at a depth of about 0.45 m below surface, probably due to a conscious attempt to remove it (figs. 214; 216). The moonstone is in a very good condition in contrast to the steps and stringers. Its worn-out and polished surface is mainly preserved (fig. 215). The stone measures 1.80 m in diameter. The Guardstones *(muragala)* have not been found yet, but some stone fragments from layers 2 and 3 or from the corresponding planum may possibly be classified as belonging to them.

[23] The term "*Makara*" refers to a mythological creature which possesses the physical attributes of an elephant, a lion and a crocodile.

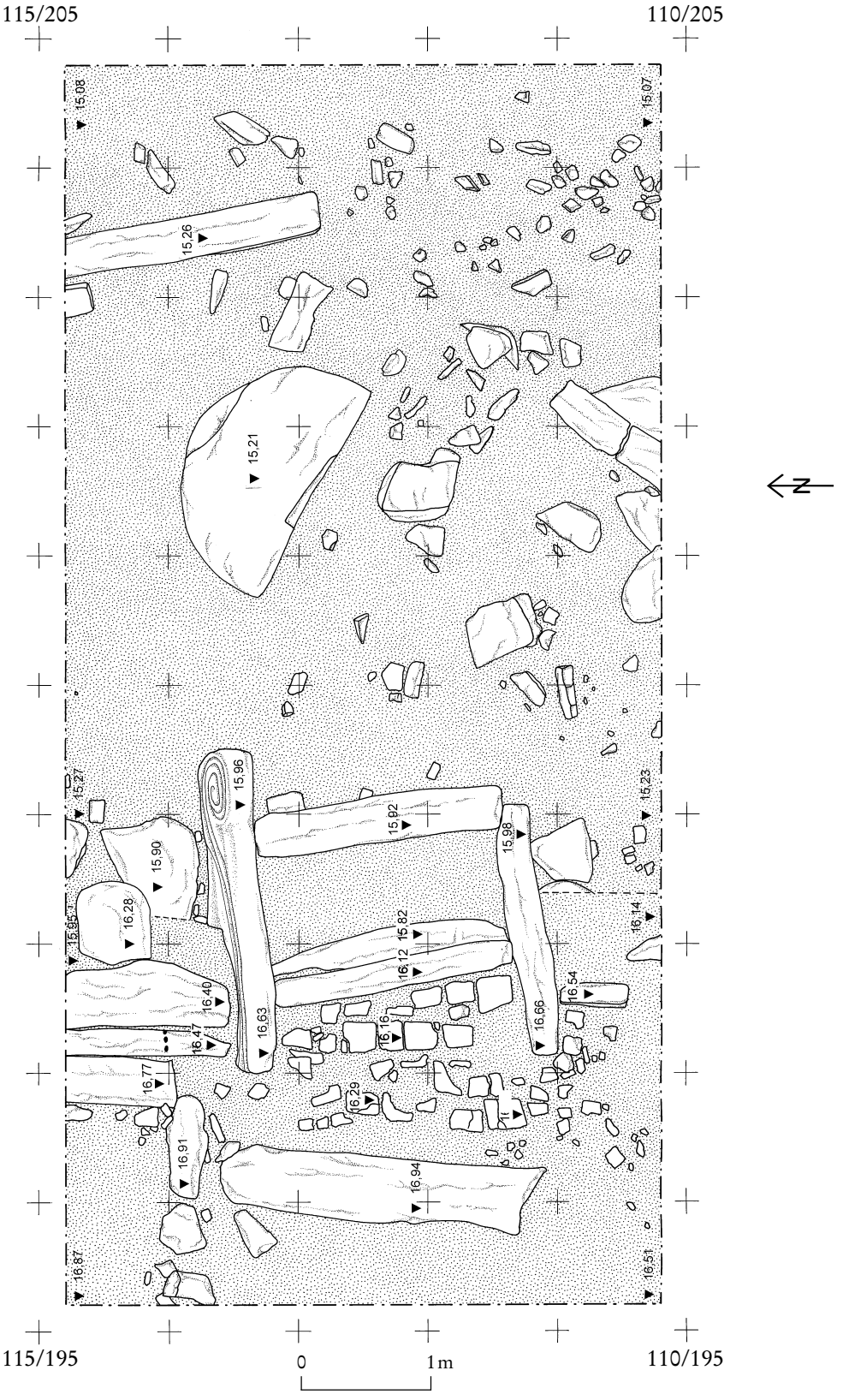


Fig. 214. GODA 3, trench 1, planum 3.

Fig. 213. GODA 3, trench 1, southern stringer.

Fig. 215. GODA 3, trench 1, planum 3, entrance situation with displaced moonstone.

The third step, partly preserved, is followed by a small platform covered with a brick-floor already inside the enclosure and only (fig. 216). Sagging destroyed much of it in the north-east. The square bricks have a length of 0.25 m from edge to edge. Further west there is another step which is much bigger than the others (L × W × H: 2.40 m × 0.50 m × 0.50 m). By means of this step it was still not possible to bridge the difference in height. Thus, considering probable erosion in this area, it is assumed that at least two further steps were necessary to make up the original surface.

The border slab touching the northern stringer was found overturned. Overlapping are two ashlar blocks belonging either to the entrance or the collapsed building. The top block is broken probably due to a fall or pressure, as no signs of tools or handling are to be seen around the point of fraction.

Only a few barely significant ceramic fragments were salvaged from among the entire trench, like some pieces from candlesticks, lampstands and oil-lamps. Already worked-on gneiss stones of all shapes and sizes were also retrieved frequently.

Fig. 216. GODA 3, trench 1, planum 2, feature 4, entrance with pavement from west.

More artefacts related to the imagehouse were discovered outside the excavated area. A flat flagstone in the middle of the imagehouse represents a kind of altar found frequently in temples and is most certainly related to the Buddha image. A second flat flagstone was removed from the site and is now set up next to the forecourt of the monastery. In addition to some flat slabs possibly part of the enclosure, at least three blocks with a squarish hole for a post are particularly worth mentioning. They were sited in the northern area of the slope and bear no relation to other finds (fig. 212). Therefore it is questionable whether they are part of the imagehouse or not.

Due to the excavation results and the artefacts collected from the surface, the area around the steps of the imagehouse can be reconstructed in the following way: the first steps led to an artificially elevated landing. Since the remains of the enclosure are quite irregular in regard to their size and shape, it is assumed that they were originally faced. The access to the imagehouse was possible by means of the upper part of the stairway. Posts may indicate that the flight of steps or the plateau were roofed over, as well as the walk to the imagehouse and the present finds so far suggest one construction-phase for the monastery, probably in accordance with the epigraphical and historical evidence, dating from the 2nd century AD.

The Chapterhouse

The building is situated north of the imagehouse on an artificial plateau and, while being on a level with the present-day forecourt and the *bodhigara*, it steeply slopes down to the west and north (fig. 206). The treble-aisled *bana-maduva* (chapterhouse) is documented fragmentarily. There are altogether 14 gneiss pillars, 12 of them are arranged in three south-north running rows with four pillars each, one is located outside the rows and another one is part of the northern east-west running row (fig. 206). These ashlar shaped pillars are preserved up to a maximum height of about 2.40 m above the recent surface. A few columns are still in an upright position, while others are slanting badly. The overall internal width between the pillars is about 4–5 m throughout. Although archaeological data about the precise position and the construction of the entrance are still wanting, it was usually situated in the middle of the east-side of the building (fig. 206).

In order to examine the external wall in the south and the base construction of the outer and inner pillars, a 12 × 3 m large trench (trench 2) was opened in the south-western part of the

plateau (fig. 206). Four layers were recorded, none of which suggest a floor covering or any ancient surface. In plana 2, 3 and 4 we encountered several grey, brown-grey and dark-brown pits containing humous soil and sandy ground as well as brick fragments. At a depth of up to 0.50 m below the recent surface, the upper edges of the column-bases had not yet been reached, nor was it possible to recognize any building pits. There were also no signs of an outer wall within the excavated area.

Up to now nothing can be stated about the composition of the plateau deposit, since they have not been noticed. Likewise questions concerning the construction of the chapterhouse have to remain unanswered. Thus no comprehensive picture can be gained from our observations. However, despite the badly weathered state of the pillars, it is evident that the upper edges were planished off and did not possess any sockets for beams. We may therefore assume a single-storey building even though the construction of the link between the supporting framework and the roof-truss is unknown. The supposed facing of the pillars might be relevant in this feature. Ceramic fragments typical of the religious setting were salvaged from among the excavated material, such as candlesticks, lampstands and oil-lamps. The ceramics date from the 2nd/3rd century right up to the Polonnaruva Period (11–13th century). Excavations are going on.

The Third Building

The remains of a third building were found between two ridges below the dagoba southeast of the image- and chapterhouse. The area has not yet been investigated archaeologically. Only a few placed stones are visible above surface. However, there is another inscription[24] on a rock protruding northward. It is much shorter than the first one and at present a final reading does not exist[25].

The Monastic Wall

The ancient monastery was surrounded by a stone wall, which can be noticed today above ground in sections west and north of the dagoba, north of the modern forecourt and south of the imagehouse (fig. 206). Because of some remains located southeast of the dagoba it becomes obvious that the wall did not only enclose the entire monastery but also a connecting passage leading to the seashore east of the dagoba (GODA 5).

The wall can be described as a monocoque construction. The facings were built up with stones, its interior and joints were filled by layers of brickstones. The above mentioned dislocated blocks with squarish holes for wooden posts found in the area north of the imagehouse may be interpreted as part of a gateway through the wall. The exact construction and function of the described wall and its connection to the remains found at the sea shore, have to be investigated in future excavations.

The Seaport

"(. . .) he sent four envoys, the chief of whom was Rachias. From them we learnt the following facts about Ceylon: it contains 500 towns, and a harbour facing south, adjacent to the town of Palaesimundus, which is the most famous of all the places in the island and a royal residence, with a population of 200.000.

Inland (we were told) there is a marsh named Megisba measuring 375 miles[26] round and containing islands that only produce pasturage; and out of this marsh flow two rivers, Palaesimundus running through three channels into the harbour near the town that bears the same name

[24] It is listed in the Register of Inscriptions of the Archaeological Department as No. 587.

[25] Two further rock inscriptions have been discovered during the fieldwork in 1997 and 1998. The first one is located about 50 m west of the inscription registered as No. 586. Only two characters, which could be identified as Brahmi script, are readable. The second one, a three-lined 2nd century inscription of king Gamani Abhaya, is situated about 1 m below inscription No. 586: Kessler in print. For reading and discussion see Falk, this volume.

[26] 7.5–8 stadia = 1 roman mile/1478.7 m (addendum by the authors).

Fig. 217. Displaced, unfinished architectural element showing working marks; originally found at the Godavaya harbour (GODA 5).

as the river, and measuring over half a mile in breadth at the narrowest point and nearly two miles at the widest, and the other, named Cydara, flowing north in the direction of India" [27].

Although this description, given by a delegation sent to Rome by the king of Taprobane during the reign of emperor Claudius, has mostly to be referred into the world of fantasy. However, the localisation of a main port in the south is obvious. In this case India is mentioned correctly as being situated in the north. That makes the report an important witness, which attributes great value to the southern Sri Lankan kingdom of Ruhuna with its capital city, sea ports and its role in ancient long distance trade relationships.

It has to be proceeded on the assumption, that the Walawe Ganga river temporary formed an at least three branched deltoid estuary. Old branches of the Walawe Ganga are still visible as ground depressions north and west of Godavaya. Situated about 800 m north of the monastery there is a depression, where a compact greyish clay layer with a thickness of 1.50 to 2 m was observed during a building project. This points to a former connection between the Walawe Ganga and the Kuja Sittrakala Lewaya. Land register plans which were kept in the area from about 1900 onwards, show a drainage of the Walawe Ganga leading to the Sitracalla Wewa, which is separated from the bay of Godavaya by a small sand barrier, only a few metres wide (figs. 205–206). James Cordiner, a clergyman and traveller, described the bay of Godavaya, where a fishermen's village and a landing site are to be seen today (fig. 218), as an indent in the coast line without any noticeable traces of settlement at the beginning of the 19th century [28]. As native fishermen stated, the bay of Godavaya is the most secure landing-place in the area. Not only for this reason the area of the later excavation GODA 5 had to be considered and proofed as the possible location of the ancient sea port.

The above mentioned rock inscription of Godavaya itself, could only be of limited use in localising of the sea port, because it only mentions the invested privilege which placed the clergy in the position to collect the incoming custom duties. Much more intensive investigation is needed on a question of great import, namely on which economic and social historical preconditions such a privilege was based. Consequently it should be asked if the Buddhist clergy would have been allowed to levy the duties directly or if they had to authorize commissioners. Royal officers also have to be

[27] Pliny Nat. Hist. VI. XXIV; translation by Rackham 1947.

[28] It is uncertain, if J. Cordiner's description is connected with the lagoon in the west of the monastery, or with the bay east of it. The latter possibility is more probable. Cordiner 1807, Vol. II, 91–94.

Fig. 218. Fishing village and harbour in the bay of Godavaya. Trench 1 of excavation GODA 5 is visible in the centre.

taken into consideration as collectors of tolls. The clay sealing with its maneless lion-motive from GODA 4 (fig. 248)[29] is of essential value as it documents the presence of an official executive who was in charge of supervising customs as it is mentioned in Kautilya's Arthashastra[30]. It may not be a coincidence, that the celadon ware was found in the same area.

The position of the rock inscription on the one hand, the designated name for the sea port on the other lead to the following reflections:

1. The rock inscription is integrated into the monastery complex and situated at a central position (close to the entrance leading to the dagoba), in order to demonstrate its economical and political power to pilgrims as well as to other visitors of the sanctuary. This presentation of royal privilege is of monastic interest and that for it does not necessarily indicate the immediate proximity of the mentioned sea port.

2. To seafaring merchants such an inscription might have been used to show the legitimisation to levy custom duties most efficient. If this presumption is right, the chiselled document would only have made sense if it was situated in immediate proximity to the harbour and had to be passed by the mariners and traders.

3. The sea port is designated in the inscription as "Godapavata". In the "history of the twelve kings" of the *Mahavamsa* the etymological identifiable term "Gotapabbata" is used:

"After Gajabahu's death the king's father-in-law Mahalaka Naga reigned six years. (The viharas) Sejalaka in the east, Gotapabbata in the south, Dakapasana in the west, in Nagadipa Salipabbata, in Bijagama Tanaveli, in the country of Ruhana Tobbalanagapabbata, in the inland country Girihalika: these seven viharas did the king Mahallanaga, ruler of the earth, build in the time (of his reign), short though it was"[31].

The application of the same name for both, the harbour and the vihara, suggests the close economic-political, geographical and architectural relationship between them.

However, the epigraphical and the historiographical source appear inconsistent with each other, if one takes into consideration, that the

[29] Cf. ann. 48. For the use of seals and sealings see the report by Müller; for the maneless lion-motive see Walburg 1997.

[30] Rangarajan 1987, 225 (2.7.17), 227 (2.21.25.26), 239 (2.21.24.26), 239 (2.26.2.15.16); 341 (2.21.3–6), 342 (2.21.20–21), 360 (5.3, 38., 41).

[31] Geiger 1912, 255, (XXXV, 123–128).

Fig. 219. Stone pillars laid open by a tidal wave in January 1997 (Photo: P. Weerasingha).

issuer king Gajabahu I. (113–135 or 174–196 AD) reportedly was the predecessor of his father-in-law king Mahallaka Naga (135–141 or 196–202 AD), the supposed founder of the vihara. This would mean, that the privilege was granted before the monastery was founded. It might be possible, that the monastery was vested with such a privilege simultaneously with its foundation. If this happened at the end of king Gajabahus I. reign, his undertaking could have been completed by his successor with the final inauguration of the vihara. It can only be speculated about a causal connection between the foundation of the monastery and the construction of a sea port. Additional explanations for the apparent chronologic contradiction might be an underlying incorrect assignment of the chiselled inscription to Gajabahu I., or an error in the Mahavamsa, which had been handed down in a multiply revised form. Comprehensive critical research on these sources is still necessary [32].

GODA 5

Before the 1997 Excavation Campaign started some inhabitants of Godavaya reported, that the southern coast line of Sri Lanka was hit by a tidal wave in the month of January, causing devastation in the fishing village. After the storm a construction consisting of seven or eight stone pillars was reportedly observed. Before being covered by sand again, the pillars were laid open by water flowing back to the sea (fig. 219). Even the eldest among the villagers testified that they neither had seen these pillars before, nor recalled a storm of comparable heaviness. Other people stated that they had picked up small pieces of silver and gold as well as large numbers of coins which were spread all over the eroded beach. Unfortunately they could not give the exact position of the observed pillar construction, because in the meantime the coast line had changed.

At the end of February 1997 a 4 m broad test pit was opened between the fishing village and the sea, about 110 m west of the plateau with the monastery and its enclosing wall. This tract of land is about 15 m below the plateau of the monastery and only 1.70 m above sea level. It constitutes part of the beach of the Godavaya bay, which is presently used as a safe harbour and landing place for fishing boats. This confined the lay out of test pit and trench to places where the fishermens work would not be hindered. The planum of the first test pit was originally intended to follow the surface of the reddish soil below the sand in order to detect possible features. But it was soon obvious, that due to the considerable slope of this layer we would not be able to do this without strengthening of the outer sections of the test pit.

[32] See also Roth 1997, 27.

Moreover, only 1 m below the beach's surface our work was severely hindered by penetrating water.

At a depth of 1.60 m below the surface of the beach (0.01 m above sea level) we came across the first monolithic pillar (fig. 220). During these works further architectural components, significantly different from the others, were discovered (see below, pillar/transom 4). Probably two more monolithic pillars were localised through test drillings, but were not uncovered.

The Feature

All in all four monolithic pillars have been discovered and investigated in trench 1 of the excavation GODA 5'97 (fig. 222). Concerning colour and structure of the stone, pillar 1 distinctly stands out against the others. In general of nearly white and somewhat cloudy colour, it has dark, almost black inclusions (markings), which gives a marble surface to it (fig. 220). In contrast to the other pillars, the stone of pillar 1 is not banded. Its composition is rather crystalline and microstructural. The sectional view of the pillar is rectangular and the overall length 3.24 m. The breadths of the separate flanks differ between 0.28 and 0.42 m. First of all it is obvious that one end of the pillar is wider. Through this base the centre of gravity of the monolith is lowered. At a height of 1.50 m measured from the pedestal the pillar shows signs of abrasion or weathering, forming a sort of lacing or incision.

More clearly than on the other pillars, working marks are visible. In the region of the base fine sickle-shaped marks of a beating tool are notable. The middle third of the pillar is well worked, while the upper third from the height of about 2.30 m upwards is coarsely chiselled. Nevertheless the upper end is executed much more accurately than the base, which might possess a sort of tenon.

Pillar 2 is worked out of grey gneiss with fine white bands running parallel to the worked edges (fig. 222). Its overall length is 3.30 m and the sectional view it is nearly quadratic, the breadth of the flanks measuring 0.28–0.30 m. The flanks of the somewhat wider and 1.14 m

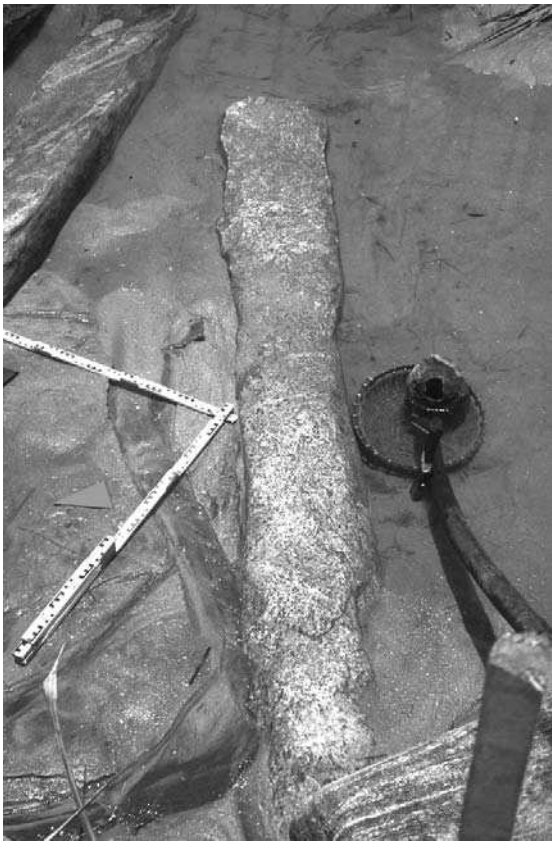
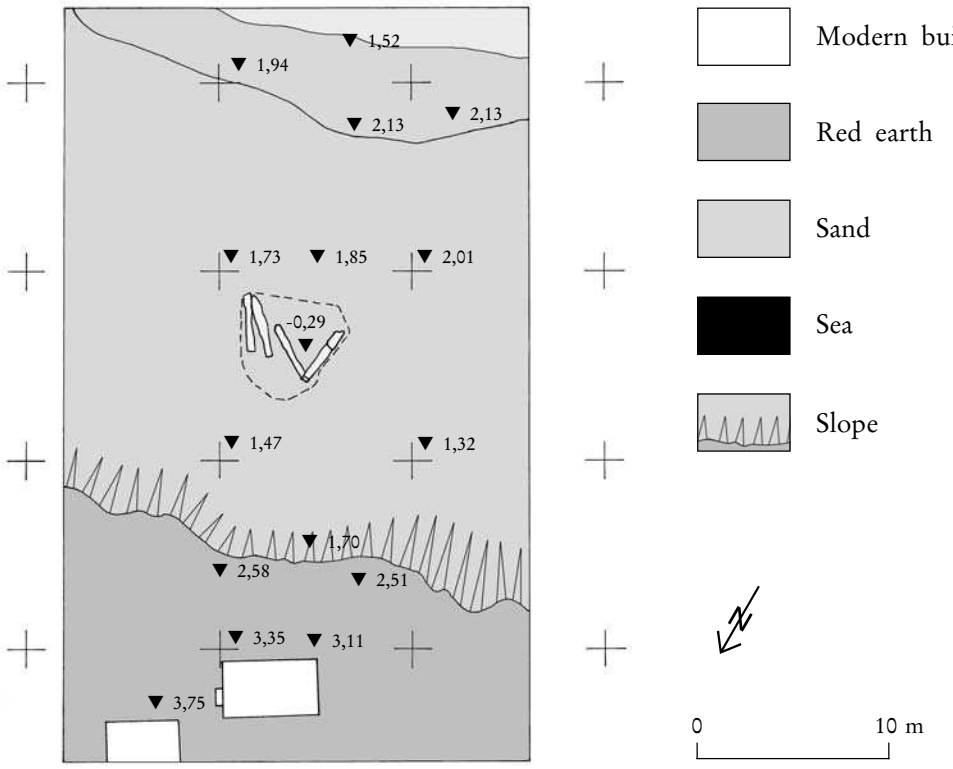


Fig. 220. GODA 5, trench 1, pillar 1.

long base have measurements between 0.35 and 0.39 m. Compared to the bases of pillars 1 and 3, the base of pillar 2 is worked much more precisely. Few marks of abrasion or weathering can be seen at a height of about 1.50 m for a length of 0.20–0.30 m. The surface shows little unevenness and is well finished. This is an extraordinary accomplishment, taking into consideration the hardness of the stone.

The base of the pillar is accentuated by means of an accurately elaborated border. Thus the pillar is optically divided in two separate parts. The lowest part of the base is shaped irregularly and might possibly be incomplete. A fine smooth finish is found at the extreme end of the upper part of the pillar, its quadratic shape underlining its general character. In the upper third of the pillar a rectangular deepening possibly represents a recess.

Fig. 221. General plan of excavation GODA 5.



Pillar 3 is also made of gneiss, but in contrast to pillars 2 and 4 it is banded diagonally compared to its worked edges (fig. 222). The overall length of this pillar is 3.40 m. While the breadth of the flanks in the upper part vary only slightly between 0.36 and 0.40 m, the base widens rising up from its pointed lower extreme end to 0.50 m. The height of the base measures 1.10 m. Marks of abrasion or weathering are ascertainable again at a height of 1.50 m in a width of 0.38 m. More overhead a 0.05 m deep carved abrasive mark is to be found (figs. 222–223). Considering the accurate worked pieces which do not belong to the base, the monolithic gneiss pillar can be seen as being divided into two parts.

Pillar/transom 4 is manufactured from the same greyish banded gneiss but like pillar 2 it is distinguished from pillars 1 and 3 through its white bands and foliations extended parallel to the worked edges (fig. 222). Its overall length is 3.55 m, while the measurements of the non-uniform flanks range from 0.15–0.44 m. This monolithic pillar could not be uncovered completely, due to the dimensions of the trench. But it is obvious, that it shows some significant differences when compared to the other structural members. Both ends are strongly flattened and at least one of them features a superficial rectangular recess. The middle of pillar/transom 4 shows signs of abrasion on one side. Due to its shape this structural member can be considered as a transom, originally resting on two or three pillars.

Comparable components have been used in the little investigated (known) but partly well preserved bridge-buildings of the Anuradhapu-

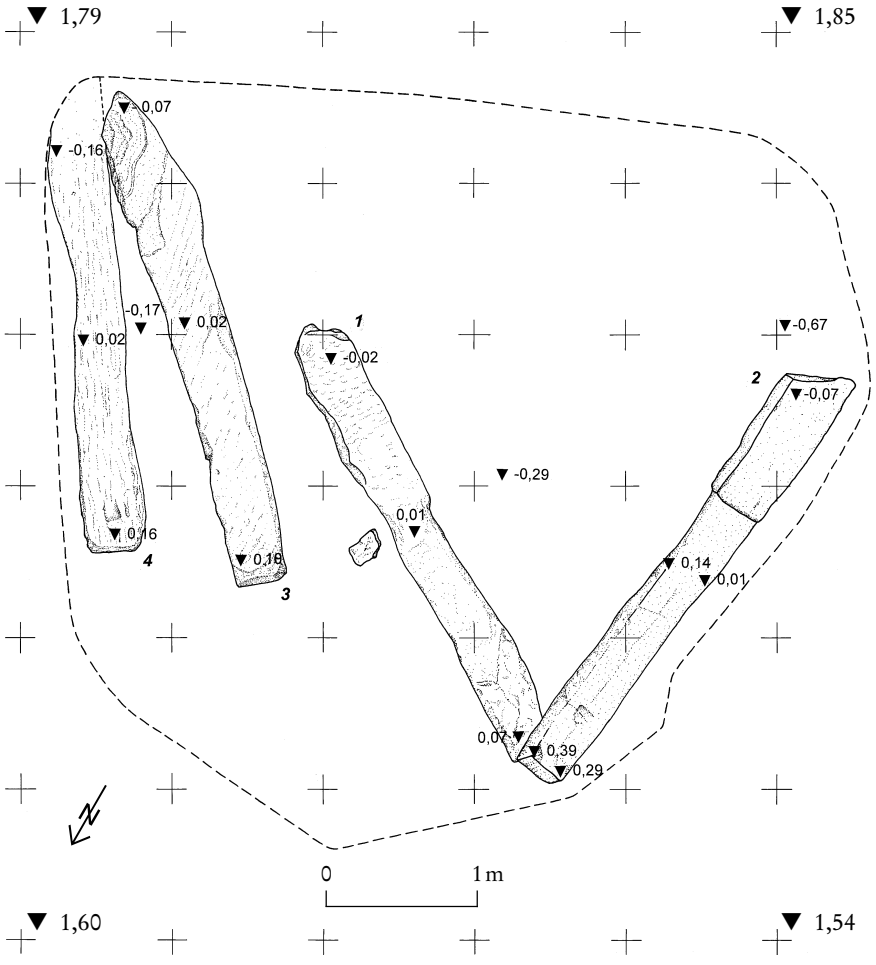


Fig. 222. GODA 5, trench 1, planum 1.

ra Period (fig. 226). At the same level a nearly quadratic stone measuring 0.16 × 0.20 × 0.20 m was found beneath the structural members (fig. 222). It can not be brought into relation to the remaining structure. Other architectural elements, for example bricks have not been found. At different places in the trench blocks of stone have been uncovered at depths between 0.29 and 0.67 m below sea level. They are probably bedrock. Recesses in which the pillars could have been erected were not found in these blocks of stone. Of course at that depth only limited areas could be investigated because of the invasion of water and sand. Remains of natural soil were not found at that level.

Among the few small finds there are some white clayed vessel fragments of coarse sandy fabric without any slip and some indeterminate pieces of wood. All were found directly below the pillars and the transom. Further investigations have not been undertaken yet and hence a definite classification is not possible. Coins were also found in the bay of Godavaya and at the upper levels of the trench. They bear no relation to the architectural elements. The oldest coin found is a so called "VOC-coin" minted in 1734 and the newest are mintings of the end of the colonial period in 1945. Such "invalid" coins have been collected by fishermen up to recent times who have used them as washers or turned them into rivets for boat repair. Many examples still can be seen on outrigger boats along the coast lines of Sri Lanka. The "coin hoard" from Godavaya bay should be seen in this connection, especially because there are pieces among

Fig. 223. GODA 5, trench 1, detail of pillar 3 with carved abrasive mark (down right).

it which have been pierced or turned into rivets. Besides that it should be remembered that the circulation of Dutch and even of discovered Roman coins is reported several times from the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century [33].

Before the trench was refilled, pillar 2 was re-erected on request of the fishermen and in agreement with the Archaeological Department of Sri Lanka. Using a lever and a traditional Sri Lankan construction technique, it took 15 men two and a half hours to re-erect the fallen gneiss-pillar. The traditional construction tool consists of two right-angled, laced palmwood beams, which support the pillar or the lever during erection (fig. 224). The flank of pillar 2 which became visible after erection was fragmented at the upper part, exactly where it formerly rested upon pillar 1 (fig. 225). The fracture is old and worn out and must have been caused by the impact of pillar 2 against pillar 1 during the collapse of the architectural structure. This fact underlines that the place of the discovery of the structural members is approximately identical with the building's ancient location. Owing to gravity which is lowered by its base, the pillar automatically attained great stability short after re-erection, even though it was not deeply (about 0.40 m) founded in the sand.

All of the structural members discovered during the excavation and described above show comparable, fundamental characteristics, which lead to the conclusion that they were used in the same building. Above all the lengths of the pillars are similar. All three of them have a base about 1.10 m high, which makes up one third of the overall length. Marks of abrasion or weathering were observed on all pillars at a height of about 1.50 m. If these marks were the result of weathering, they would represent the height where the pillars rose above the surface of the sea or the earth. An interpretation of these marks as the result of abrasion caused by ropes seems unjustified.

After the erection of pillar 2 it was registered that its upper edge, with a height of 2.63 m above sea level, compensates the difference in elevation between the coastland and the fishing village. This fact can be seen as further evidence of a footbridge-building, probably to assist loading and unloading.

A building of comparable construction is the stone bridge which runs across the Malwatu Oya north of Jetavana. This building, belonging to the Anuradhapura-Period, shows structural members of the same measurements and characteristics as the architectural elements found in the bay of Godavaya (fig. 226) [34].

It has to be emphasized, that only very little can be said about the function of these architectural elements and the structure to which they once belonged. This is partly due to the fact that other excavations in direct proximity to the Indian Ocean and below the sea level have not been undertaken yet. Consequently, excavated ancient port facilities and buildings

[33] Among others: Warmington 1974, 124.
[34] Seneviratna 1994, 182–183.

Fig. 224. GODA 5, Re-erecting gneiss pillar 2. A traditional constructing tool, consisting of two right-angled, laced palmwood beams supported the lever.

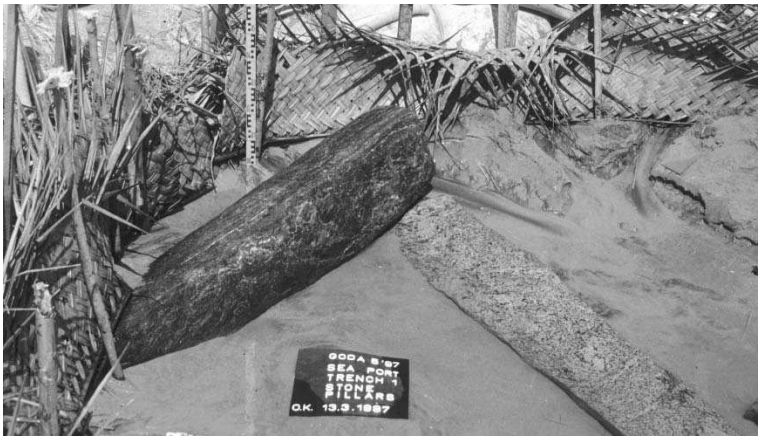


Fig. 225. GODA 5, trench 1, collapsed pillar 2 resting upon collapsed pillar 1.

Fig. 226. Stone bridge across the Malwathu Oya near Anuradhapura / Jethavana (1998).

do not exist in Sri Lanka up to now, and we do not know anything about their structure and function. At least in this regard the architectural structure in the bay of Godavaya is unparalleled. However, relics of a probably comparable building might have been observed by Mr. Forbes in the 1830s. He describes a single pillar and other architectural relics of a building situated in the surf below the Vishnu sanctuary in the coastal town of Matare[35].

[35] Forbes 1840, Vol. II, 177.

The Residential Area

In line with the survey results, three residential areas to the west and north of the monastery were studied archaeologically, starting from the south. The areas GODA 1 and GODA 2 were investigated in 1994, and GODA 4 in 1995–1997 (figs. 206–207). With the exception of GODA 1, all the excavation sites are situated in areas occupied by modern residential estates.

This caused problems. The modern development of Godavaya village is fairly recent. The first buildings were erected in the 1940s but large parts of the area remained uncolonized until the 1960s. To the south of Sri Lanka the occupation of land usually takes place in several stages. First a plot of land is occupied by building a hut in the traditional manner with wood and clay. Stands are set into a clay landing and bound together with wattle and daub. Then it is plastered over with clay taken from a relatively small pit. The necessary wood is supplied from the trees growing on the plot. Dung and rice-chaff as well as pottery sherds serve as tempering material producing loam. Due to extensive rice-farming, the latter is amply available. The same applies to the palm tree mats for covering the roof. In a second stage, which often goes on for years, people begin building a stone-house. The foundations are laid in natural stone close to the mud-hut. On their own plot large quantities of clay are extracted as raw material for making bricks, tempered by dung and rice-chaff. The latter also serves as fuel for baking the bricks. Thus, little by little, a new brick-house comes into being, after which the clay-hut is given up even when the building is partly finished.

Bricks are often produced and sold beyond a family's own need, contributing to their living. Bricks from Godavaya have a good reputation in the area and are in great demand. Hence, it is not surprising that at some places more than 50% of the area of archaeological interest has been lost. In some extreme cases only that part of the plot remained untouched on which the house was actually built while the rest was laid open down to the bedrock.

GODA 1

Close to the monastery the excavation area GODA 1 was opened in an area sloping westwards by about 12–15° towards the lagoonal expanse of the Walawe Ganga (with a 5–6 m altitude difference of 250 m). The area was chosen because it appeared auspicious judging from the survey and the fact that no larger rocks disturbed the field.

Three trenches (trench 1 = 5 m × 10 m, 2 and 3 each 5 m × 2 m) and two test pits (test pit 1 and 2 each 2 m × 2 m) were dug in an area of 74 m² (fig. 206). Humus topsoil only a few centimetre deep was found in trench 1 followed by a homogenous, slightly sandy, brown and reddish soil 0.15 m below the recent surface. There were no features in the first planum of trench 1, except a modern disturbance in form of a rectangular pit with charcoal pieces and ash particles. Planum 2, 0.10–0.15 m deep, was situated directly above a layer which was about 0.30–0.50 m below the recent surface, its maximum strength being 0.40–0.50 m. Its dark-brown colour and extremely high consistency made it easy to follow its course. (The layer mostly produced alien materials, predominantly ceramics and slag.) The trench sections showed that the strength of the layer increased in accordance to the slope. In planum 3 the first archaeological structures were discovered at a depth of 0.40–0.50 m, i. e., four smallish rectangular to oblong pits of a light-grey loose ashy filling. In two of these features predominantly brick-fragments were found. Eventually in the 4th layer at a depth of 0.80–0.90 m bedrock was partially hit. The stratigraphies of trenches 2 and 3 are similar. In neither trenches features were located. Rock-bottom was reached at depths between 1.20–3.00 m in test pits 1 and 2, above which a strongly weathered layer of 0.10–0.15 m was observed mainly containing oolitic iron. The stratigraphy of test pit 2 slightly differs from those in trenches 1, 2, and 3 as well as test pit 1 by having a 3.00 m thick layer of earth above the bedrock. The section also displays further layers of coarse and fine sands.

Some problems arise when trying to date the finds and features of excavation area GODA 1. The pottery fragments cover a period stretching from the 1st half of the 1st millennium AD to the Polonnaruva Period. A clear stratigraphic division of the material-most of it is probably discarded and eroded material from the monastery-proved impossible because of the fact that all human activities of several centuries found their expression within one sigle layer. With the analysis still in process, nothing can yet be said about the composition and date of the slags[36].

GODA 2

Excavation area GODA 2 was situated northwest of the monastery at the foot of the slope described earlier close to the river bank of the Walawe Ganga (figs. 206–207). Because of the high population density and large scale extraction of clay, a complete survey of the area was impossible. However, two smaller trenches (trenches 2 and 3 [2 m × 5 m/2 m × 4 m]) were opened in addition to a 2m × 2 m large test pit (section 1), amounting to an overall area of 22 m². Moreover, it was possible to clean the sections of the extracted clay edges and to note the successive superposition of layers[37].

Finds were first laid open *in situ* in the second planum of trench 2 at a depth of 0.30 m (large bowls and pots decorated by "paddle-stamping") unfortunately without any allocated features. In trench 3 a potsherd pavement was excavated 0.50 m beneath the recent surface. These vessel types came into use not before the 2nd/3rd century AD (Tissamaharama phase e).

A number of finds with no relation to the rest were excavated as, for example, several roundels, net-weights and a clay ball, two beads, sea-shells, cypreae, shark-teeth, fish-bones, an indefinable horn fragment, the remains of two corroded iron objects and a small lead-ring.

The sections of the test pits and the extracted clay edges revealed a similar stratigraphy to that of excavation area GODA 1. Homogenous and sterile sand-deposits of the river were observed directly above the bedrock in the sections from

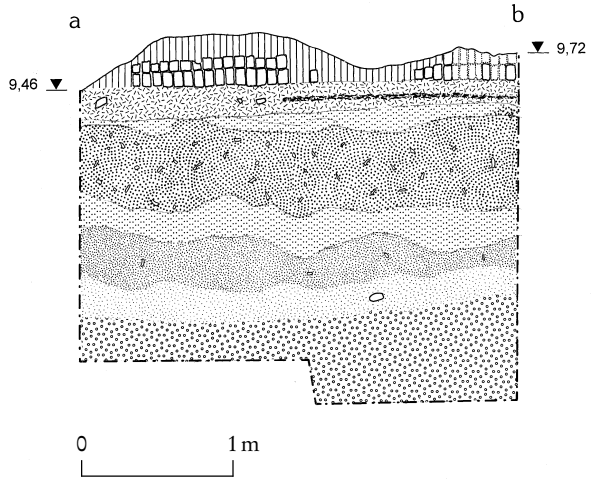


Fig. 227. GODA 2, section 1.

the vicinity of the bank (fig. 227), yet it has not been possible to identify the find-bearing layers throughout the immediate bank area[38]. The exact soil section of the river bank down to the bedrock could not be determined because of penetrating groundwater. As far as it is possible to draw any conclusions from the above, it is assumed that excavation area GODA 2 was probably densely populated in ancient times. It may further imply that we possibly touched on an outer area of the ancient settlement.

GODA 4

Excavation area GODA 4 is situated north of the monastery in the midst of the modern village Godavaya (figs. 206). The ensuing difficulties were expounded above. However, it was possible to locate two larger undisturbed plots. These were examined by means of 8 trenches (trenches 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 9, 10 and 11).

[36] The analysis is being carried out in the Mining Museum in Bochum.

[37] The refusal of the land-owner meant that part of the studies in excavation area GODA 2 begun in 1994 (trenches 2 and 3) could not be completed.

[38] During the drought a villager found a number of pottery sherds (2nd/3rd century AD) on his compound while digging for clay in the immediate bank area.

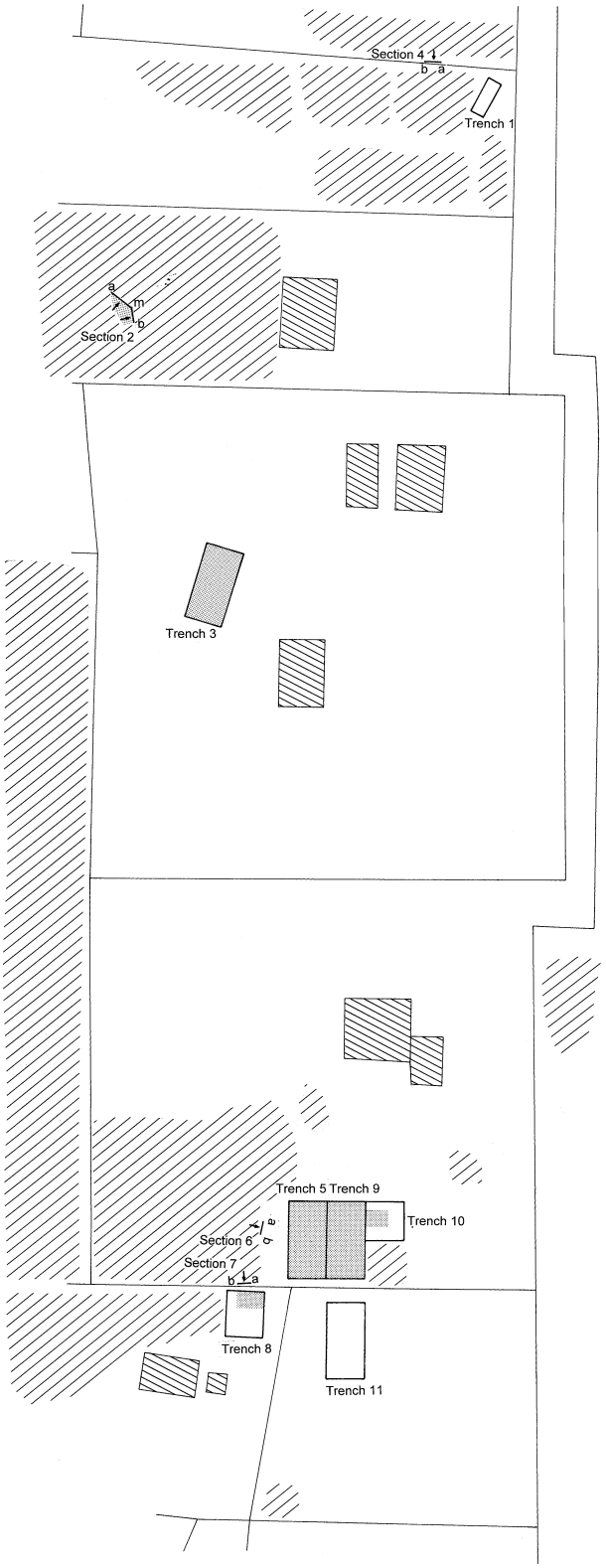


Fig. 228. GODA 4, general plan of excavation. Scale 1:1000.

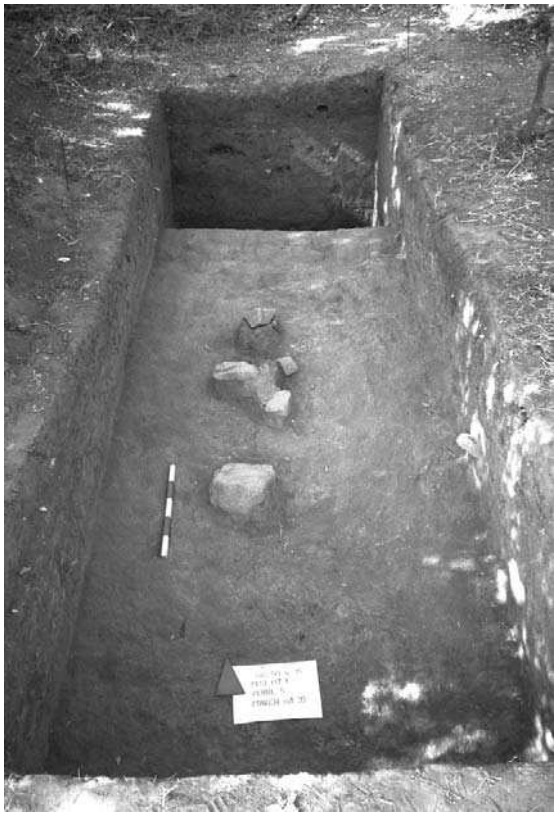


Fig. 229. GODA 4, trench 1, planum 5.

Three sections around the extracted clay edges were cleaned (section 4, 6, and 7). The whole examination area was extended to 285 m² (fig. 228).

Northern Area

In the northern part of excavation area GODA 4 (trenches 1–3, section 4) the stratigraphy was comparable to those noted in excavation areas GODA 1 and GODA 2, including the strength of the individual layers. Apart from three hewn stones lying in a row 0.80 m below the surface, no finds were made in trench 1 (fig. 229). A relation to the other features could not be established. By excavating the 5th layer, undisturbed soil was removed and the rock-bottom was reached at the depth of 1.40 m.

Trench 2 had an irregular shape as a result of its position, and a size of about 20 m². In the first planum a complete vessel was found

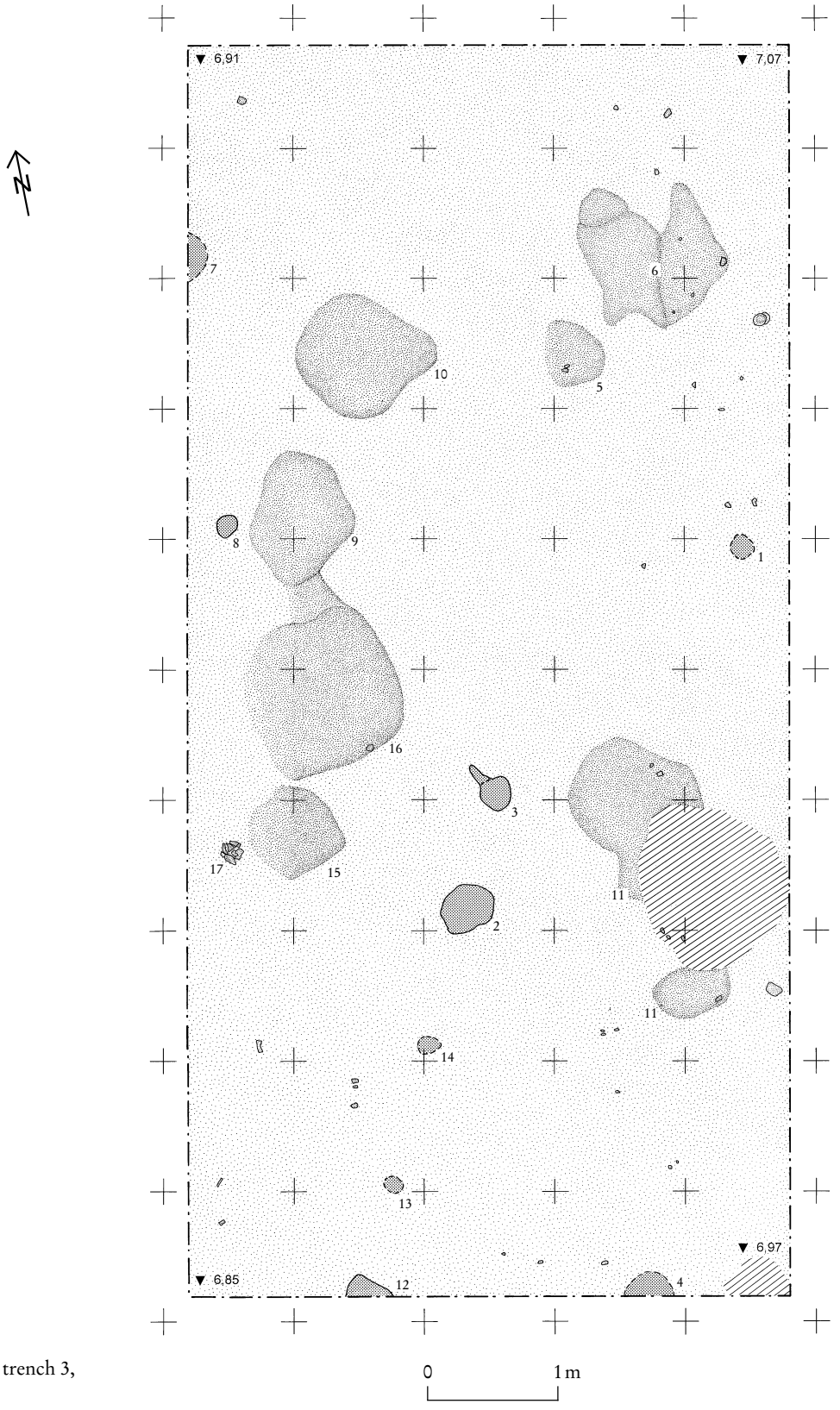


Fig. 230. GODA 4, trench 3, planum 5.

Fig. 231. GODA 4, trench 5 during excavation.

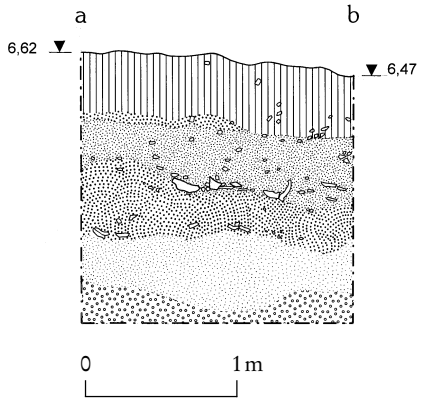


Fig. 232. GODA 4, section 7, a–b.

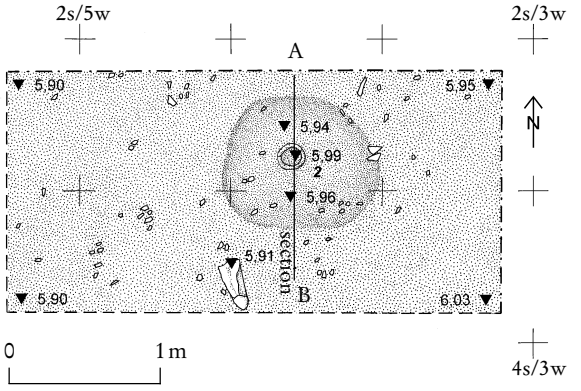


Fig. 233. GODA 4, trench 8, planum 2, feature 2.

standing in an almost round pit. This was barely noticeable in the section and the only feature in the area. A large amount of pottery was excavated from trenches 1 and 2 as well as section 4. Among the pottery were a few sherds of black polished ware. Decorated clay balls and roundels, slags, pieces of charcoal as well as mammal and fish bones were also found.

Trench 3 [39] suggests a densely populated area. In 5 plana altogether 21 features were located on 50 m^2, most of these being pits. Smaller discoloured patches may represent post holes which have a brownish colour in the planum. Their filling is much sandier than the surrounding earth. The pits can be divided into large and small ones. There are 13 smaller pits with diameters of 0.15–0.60 m (plana 1–5), some round, some oval or triangular. The five large pits with irregular to rectangular shape have a size of 0.40–1.20 m and show up by grey-brown discoloration in the plana (fig. 230). Besides pottery, the humous and slightly sandy filling also carried charcoal pieces and glass fragments. The find of several kgs. of iron slag [40] was

[39] The area designated as trench 3 was originally made up of testpits 3, 3B and 3C.

[40] Iron slag will be examined by the Mining Museum in Bochum.

Fig. 234. GODA 4, trench 8, feature 2, section A–B. Sectional view of a pit, containing two vessels of the 1st century AD, one covering the mouth of the other.

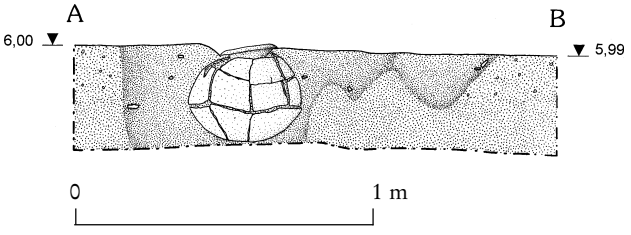


Fig. 235. GODA 4, trench 8, feature 2, section A–B. Sectional view of a pit, containing two vessels of the 1st century AD, one covering the mouth of the other.

particularly conspicuous as well as a number of other small finds as, for example, a number of beads[41].

Layer 5 contained a piece of early Chinese celadon ware. This type of pottery was first produced as early as during the Shang Dynasty (16th–11th century BC). Earliest trade with "proto-celadon" can be assumed according to find locations during the Western Zhou Dynasty, which began in the 11th century BC. The paste of this "proto-celadon" pottery was fairly fine and the art of applying glaze was already improved[42]. From "The Warring states period" (475–221 BC) on celadon products are usually referred as "early celadon". The celadon ware fragment, found in the oldest layer of trench 3 probably dates from the period of the "Three Kingdoms" (220–280 AD)[43]. The olive-green glazed thick bodied fragment belonged to a large transportation/storing vessel[44]. These olive-green glazes are also associated with a group of wares termed "Northern Chinese celadons". Its

[41] The beads of Godavaya will be investigated by A. S. Hannibal-Deraniyagala.

[42] Li/Cheng 1989.

[43] This would be the earliest Chinese ceramic material reported to be found at archaeological excavations in Sri Lanka so far. The early dating is not surprising if one takes into consideration that the earliest contacts between Sri Lanka and China date back to the 1st century AD (Bhatika Abhaya, who is also called Bhatika Tissa or Bhatiya Tissa, sent an embassy to China between 19 BC and 9 AD; Yungyutiau, i. e. Dravidra King of Shen-Simhale (Sri Lanka) sent an embassy to the chinese court in the year 97 AD. Cf. Weerasinghe 1995, 38–39, 118). Earlier Mantai was said to have the oldest chinese pottery. "To my mind there is no doubt that the earliest imported Chinese material will be found at Mantai, with its long established history as the major trading port up to the tenth century. So far, the earliest Chinese pottery from Mantai is of the Táng dynasty (618–906 AD) . . .": Carswell 1985, 57.

[44] The authors wish to thank U. Wiesner (Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum, Köln), as well as N. Hausermann and her colleagues from the "Museum of East-Asian Art/Cologne" (Museum für Ostasiatische Kunst Köln), for their support in classifying the fragment.

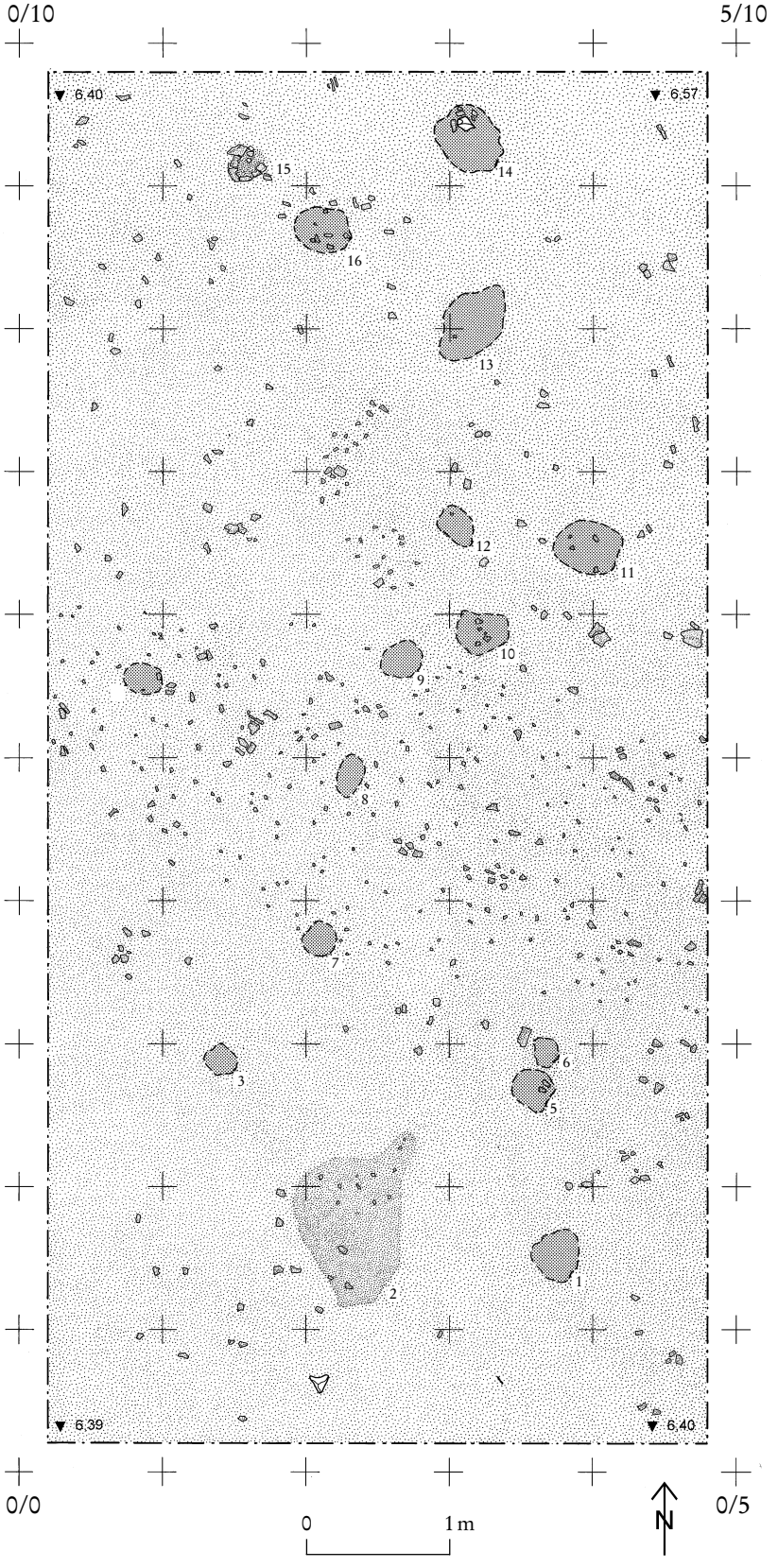


Fig. 236. GODA 4, trench 5, planum 2.

colours are based on a ferrous or ferric-oxide mixture[45].

Southern Area

In the southern part of excavation area GODA 4 the situation is different. A large continuous area of 205 m² could be investigated in trenches 5, 8, 9, 10, 11 and three find-bearing strata could be distinguished by means of sections 6 and 7 (fig. 228)[46].

Horizon 1:

The uppermost horizon is about 0.40–0.60 m beneath the recent surface (figs. 228; 232). Its surface is even while the inclined planum slightly slanting south-westwards causes altitude differences. In accordance to its localization in section 7, the horizon was excavated in trenches 5, 9, 10 and 11 as planum 2 and in trench 8 as planum 1. The stratum contains light-brown and partly greyish humus soil including pieces of charcoal and occasional bone fragments. The large quantity of pottery in all plana is particularly striking. From a first examination of the forms the youngest pieces, according to H. Schenk, can be dated into the 6th/7th century AD. The material is strongly intermingled and consequently, the dates ascribed to the finds are vague. Only a very small part of the pottery could be assigned to features, as, for example, the fragments of four vessels excavated in trenches 5 and 8. The vessel found in trench 5, feature 15, had an estimated diameter of 0.25 m. A 0.76 × 1.00 m large round to oval pit in trench 8 (feature 1) contained

[45] Hetherington 1937, 16.

[46] While trenches 5, 8, 9 and 10 were excavated down to the natural soil, the work on trench 11 has not been completed yet.

several fragments of a large bowl and a second vessel. Beneath feature 1 another two vessels were discovered (feature 2) placed in one another (figs. 233–235). An irregularly shaped area of a grey to light-brown coloured feature (trench 5, feature 2) represents a pit (fig. 236). The filling also contained pottery fragments, none of which are comparable to the vessels above.

In the second planum of trench 5 fourteen features were noticed, which might be interpreted as post holes (fig. 236). They were categorized according to form, size, and their relative position. Six of the features (trench 5, feature 3, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 12) have a very sandy grey to light-grey filling. The remaining eight features (trench 5, feature 1, 4, 5, 10, 11, 13, 14 and 16) show up grey to light-brown in the planum. It is also possible to divide these features into two groups in view of their calculated size: the first unit consists of seven post holes (section 5, feature 1, 5, 10, 11, 13, 14 and 16). All of them are of irregular shape and have diameters of nearly 0.30 m. The values fluctuate between the extremes of 0.18 m and 0.60 m. Five of the supposed post holes (trench 5, feature 1, 5, 10, 13, and 14) form a single file. The features belonging to the second group (trench 5, feature 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 12) have a slightly smaller diameter of about 0.20 m. Their fluctuation rate is smaller with values between 0.18m and 0.30 m. Three of the alleged post holes (trench 5, feature 3, 4, 9) are almost round; the rest have an irregular shape (trench 5, feature 6, 7, 8 and 12). The fact that five of these finds are in file (trench 5, feature 3, 7, 8, 9, and 12) suggests a construction, to which a further

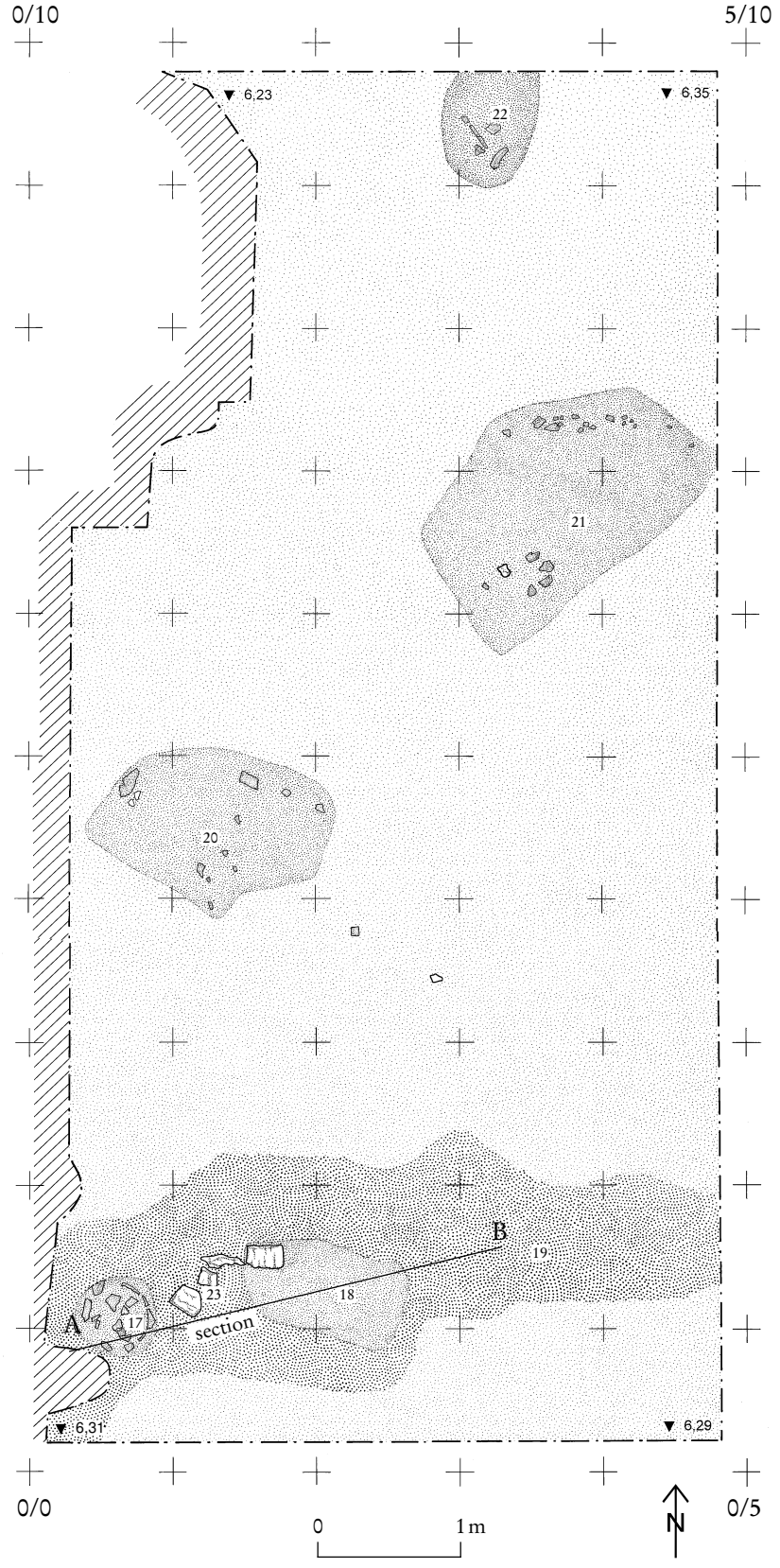


Fig. 237. GODA 4, trench 5, planum 4.

Fig. 238. GODA 4, trench 5, features 17, 18, 23, section A–m.

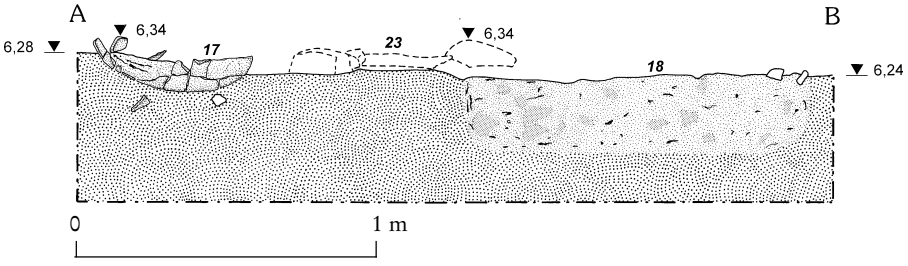


Fig. 239. GODA 4, trench 5, features 17, 18, 23, section A–B.

post hole (trench 5, feature 4) may possibly be attributed. With the exception of trench 5, feature 4, the groups of features appear to correspond in regard to their shape and size as well as the filling.

Horizon 2:

The second horizon is continuously about 0.40 m lower than horizon 1, about 0.80–1.00 m below the recent surface. The surface of this horizon is about 0.20 m lower in the south-west (trench 8) than in the north-east (trench 10), which is in accordance with the natural incline of the area. In the eastern sections of trench 9 we have already reached the brown-yellowish to yellowish-grey undisturbed soil which is slightly sandy. The horizon was excavated in trench 5 as planum 4, in trench 8 as planum 2, and in trenches 9, 10 and 11 as planum 3. The settlement horizon consists of slightly sandy grey-brown humus soil with some pieces of charcoal and bricks. The large number of pottery and bone fragments is particularly noteworthy in this planum. In the plana there are altogether seven pits out of which nearly complete vessels were excavated. Two features are to be found in trench 5, features 17 and 22 (figs. 237–239; 254,4–5) and another two: trench 8, feature 2 and 3 (figs. 233–234). Trench 9 also contains two of them: features 1 and 2 (figs. 240–244) and trench 10 bears another pit of this kind: feature 1 (figs. 245–247). The first pit is round: trench 5,

feature 17 (fig. 237), still 0.11 m deep, and measures 0.57–0.64 m in diameter. The vessel standing on the pit's ground is barely smaller than the pit itself measuring 0.56 m in diameter. The second pit: trench 5, feature 22 (fig. 237) is oval-shaped which is why its diameter varies between 0.66–0.84 m. The pit-filling is grey and contains a large number of pottery fragments. The third pit: trench 8, feature 2 (fig. 233) has already been mentioned in connection with horizon 1, because it is intersected by another pit (trench 8, feature 1) belonging to that younger layer. The more or less round pit which belongs to the elder horizon contained two vessels placed in one another. A well preserved small dish with a diameter of 19.5 cm closed off the opening of a much bigger globular vessel with a maximal diameter of 38 cm (fig. 234). The fourth pit (Trench 8, feature 3) with a diameter of about 1.00 m contained charcoal and bones as well as a badly squashed vessel with a diameter of about 0.75 m and a height of still only 0.23 m. The humose filling of the vessel is of greyish-brown colour and contained charcoal, while the pit-filling is of light-brown greyish colour. The fifth pit (trench 9, feature 1) is almost round with a diameter of 0.65 m (fig. 240). The nearly complete wide vessel is preserved up to a height of 0.27 m and has a diameter of about 0.40 m. It is decorated with two encircling grooves (figs. 241–242) and the bottom was taken out (fig. 253; 254,3). The sixth pit (trench 9, feature 2) with a diameter of 0.45 m is the smallest of the seven and contained a minimally smaller vessel measuring about 0.43 m in diameter (figs. 240; 243–244). Measured from

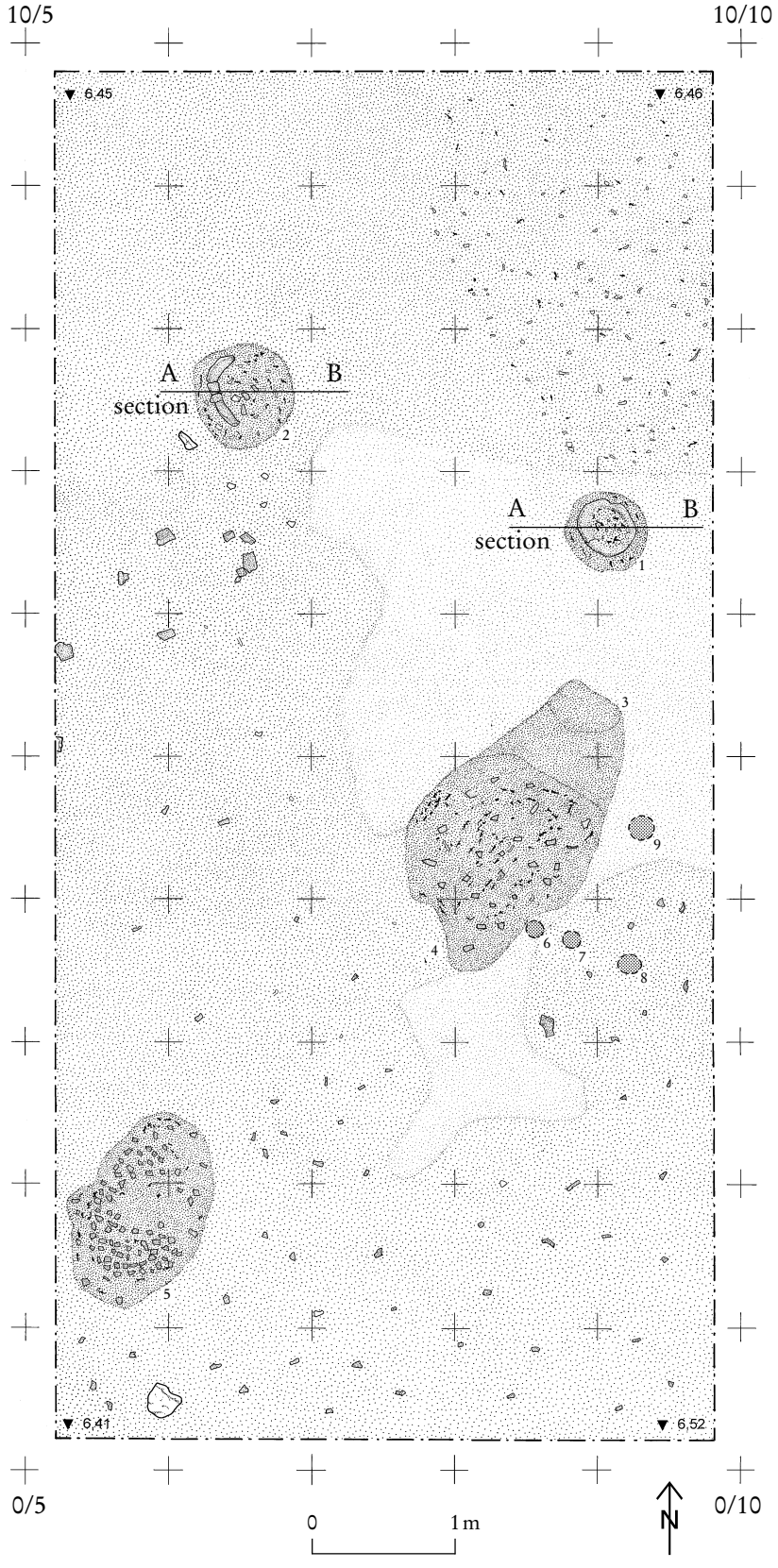


Fig. 240. GODA 4, trench 9, planum 3.

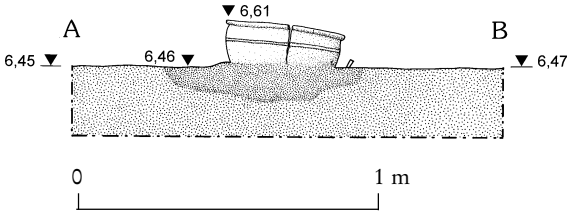


Fig. 241. GODA 4, trench 9, feature 1, section A–B.

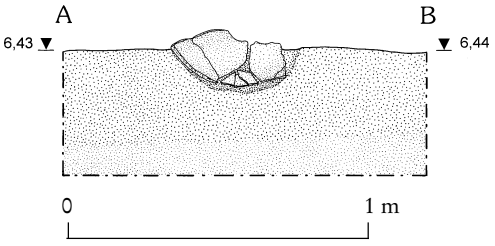


Fig. 243. GODA 4, trench 9, feature 2, section A–B.

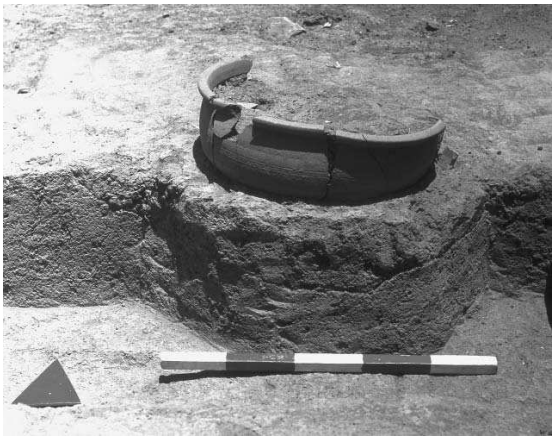


Fig. 242. GODA 4, trench 9, feature 1, section A–B.

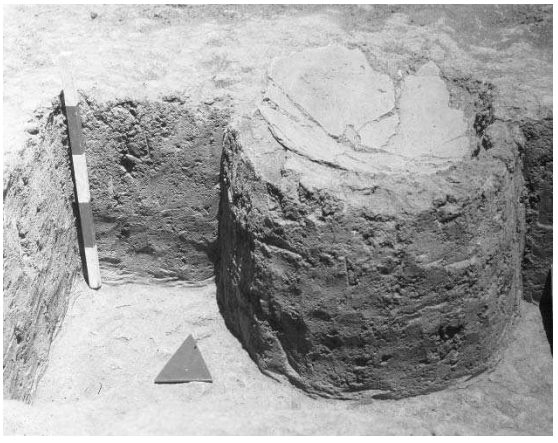


Fig. 244. GODA 4, trench 9, feature 2, section A–B.

the top of the vessel to the bottom of the pit it is preserved 0.22 m deep. Finally, the nearly round seventh pit: trench 10, feature 1 (fig. 245) with a diameter of 0.74 m brought forth the largest surviving vessel of this horizon (figs. 246; 254,1). The badly squashed globular pot measures 0.55 m in diameter. The pit-filling is grey-brown humus soil (fig. 247). Another complete vessel (trench 10, feature 2), a small dish with a diameter of 0.15 m, was found bearing no obvious relation to any other finds, except possibly the sixth pit mentioned above (trench 10, feature 1) as it was deposed only 1.10 m south-west of it (figs. 245; 247; 252; 254,1).

Two more characteristic finds may be represent similar features. The main difference to the group of features mentioned above consists in the fact that a corresponding pit could not be made out either in the planum or in the section. One of these *in situ* situated vessels was unearthed in section e–f of trench 8: feature 5. Also belonging to the second horizon its bottom reaches down to the level of planum 4 (5.33 m above sea-level), 0.97 m below the recent surface. The maximum diameter of this bulgy vessel measures still 30 cm, while its preserved height is only 15 cm. The second vessel, which had been discovered in trench 11 (feature 2), shows a maximal diameter of 42 cm and is also bulgy in shape. Its bottom is to be found in a depth of 0.78 m, at the level of planum 3 (5.95 m above sea-level) and its height is still 30 cm.

In the planum of trench 5 an almost oval pit (trench 5, feature 20) appears dark-grey to dark-brown (fig. 237). It measures 1.76 × 1.16 m and

is relatively large being 0.65 m deep. The filling consists of three even layers. The bottom layer is yellowish-brown to grey and contains fragments of pottery, bones and charcoal. The middle layer carries humus soil; its brown colour is much darker than the bottom layer. Pottery was found in this layer, too (figs. 255–256). The top layer is also made up of humus soil but its colour is even darker than that of the middle layer. A number of significant small finds were brought to light from the two upper layers as, for example, nine beads, a bone hairpin, some pieces of "painted" pottery as well as a phallic modelled fragment of pottery. A small mortar comes from the bottom area of the filling's uppermost layer.

Another more or less rectangular pit (trench 5, feature 21) measures 1.98 × 1.32 m in the planum, but it reaches only 0.30 m below the surface (fig. 237). Two layers of 0.15 m thickness each can be distinguished in section. The bottom layer is brownish-grey and hardly bears any finds. The top layer is dark-brown and contains pottery fragments, slags, iron-ore, charcoal and bones. A clay ball and an orange bead were also found in this layer.

A feature in the southern section of trench 5 (trench 5, feature 19) can be interpreted as a moat nearly stretching across the entire width of the trench (fig. 237). In the east its sectional view is fairly flat, whereas it assumes the shape of a pointed moat further west. The preserved depth extends from 0.26 m in the east to 0.90 m in the west. The filling of the moat is dark-brown to grey humus soil and contains pottery, bones and charcoal. Some lumps of burned soil displaying marks of round poles, possibly rods, deserve special attention. It can be regarded as daub.

The interpretation of four stones, describing a quarter-circle (trench 5, feature 23), is still under discussion (fig. 237). It is uncertain whether the stones were deliberately placed and whether a pit (trench 5, feature 18) is functionally related to them (fig. 239). Presupposing a full circle, the feature would measure 1.00–1.40 m in diameter. The soil around the placed stones is in no way discoloured or differently

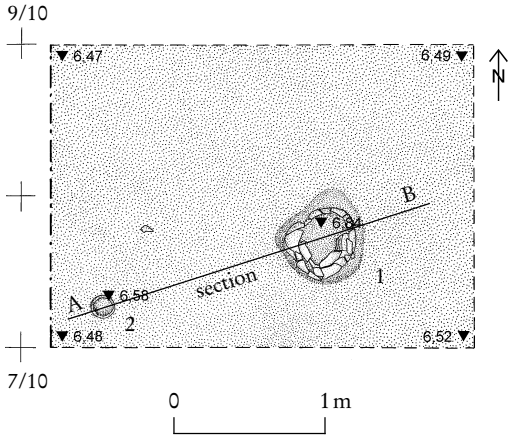


Fig. 245. GODA 4, trench 10, planum 3, features 1 and 2.

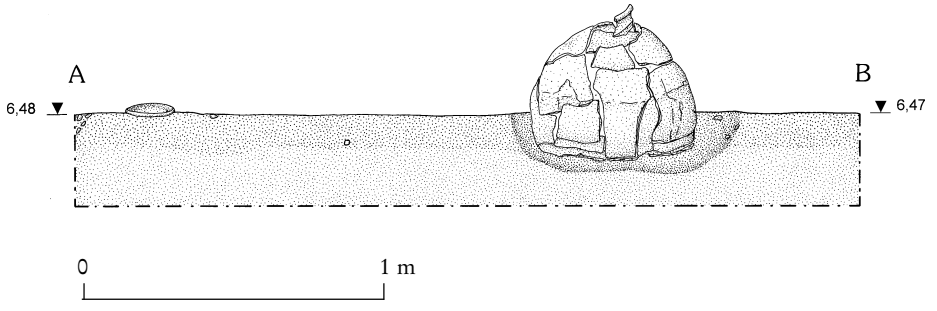


Fig. 246. GODA 4, trench 10, features 1 and 2, section A–B.

composed than the surrounding earth. However, there are charcoal and bone fragments. Over to the east, a mere 4–8 cm below this feature, one already comes upon the upper edge of an oblong pit, the length of it was observed up to 1.85 m. The pit is 0.80 m wide and 0.52 m deep, its filling is greyish-brown and contains many lumps of burned soil that have not been analysed fully yet. Some of the fragments may be attributed to stoves, others, bearing thin rod marks, can be considered as daub.

Planum 3 of trench 11 contains four pits. Two of them are filled with daub, while the others contain respectively one fragmented vessel. In all these features small pieces of charcoal and bone fragments have been found.

Two pottery concentrations were noticed in trenches 8 and 9. While it is a rather isolated phenomenon in trench 8 (trench 8, feature 4), the pottery cluster in trench 9 covers the entire southern part of the trench which amounts to one third of the area.

Horizon 3:
Despite greatest efforts, a third horizon could only be demonstrated for section 7 at a depth of 1.08–1.25 m (fig. 232). Its bottom edge shows up light-brown and consists of sandy, slightly humous soil containing several pottery, charcoal and bone fragments. In the neighbouring trenches 5 and 8 as well as in section 6 undisturbed soil was already reached at the same level. This may be due to a small patch of earth developing out of the bedrock in the area of section 7. However, it could also simply be a larger feature deepened from horizon 2.

Concluding Remarks

This paper deals with some results and aspects of the excavations at Godavaya as they appear according to the present state of investigation. The first results make it necessary to separate the ancient place of Godavaya into several units: the monastic complex, the sea port, the huge settlement area, and the riverside landing facilities for the traffic up the river to the ancient Ridiagama settlement.

Up to now only little can be said about the monastery with final certainty. A comparative investigation of the architectural remains due to the opinion that the monastic buildings are dating from the same period as the chiselled rock inscription. Possibly the preserved remains belong to the first monastery buildings which, according to the *Mahavamsa* were built in the reign of Mahallaka Naga (135–141 or 196–202 AD). The excavations brought no evidence of proceeding buildings. With the exception of the dagoba, which has been restored in modern times, the monastery seems to be of a monophasic structure. The construction requires further investigation. Because of its location on an upper plateau and the surrounding wall, the monastery has a secluded appearance.

The problems which are linked with the localisation of the sea port have been discussed extensively. Nevertheless the architectural structure which has been found in the bay of Godavaya is unique. It has already been pointed out that no comparable structure has been discovered in Sri Lanka before. Therefore interpretation of the architectural remains, partly situated below the sea level, is most difficult. However, we have good reasons to attribute them to the harbour facilities. According to their type these structural members and the architectural relicts of the monastic chapter-house must belong to the same period.

The settlement area stretches over several square kilometres along the river banks of the Walawe Ganga and up to the modern main road (figs. 206–207). Pottery which was found in the oldest horizon of that settlement dates back into the 1st century AD[47], while the youngest vessel fragments of upper horizon 1 (trench 8, feature 1) belongs to the 6th/7th century.

The dwelling houses of both horizons, according to the documented post holes and finds of daub were probably lightly built wood-clay constructions. Nevertheless finds such as bricks, worked stones and a decorated roof tile in the ancient settlement area suggest that not only in the monastery and the sea port, but also in the

[47] See Schenk, this volume.

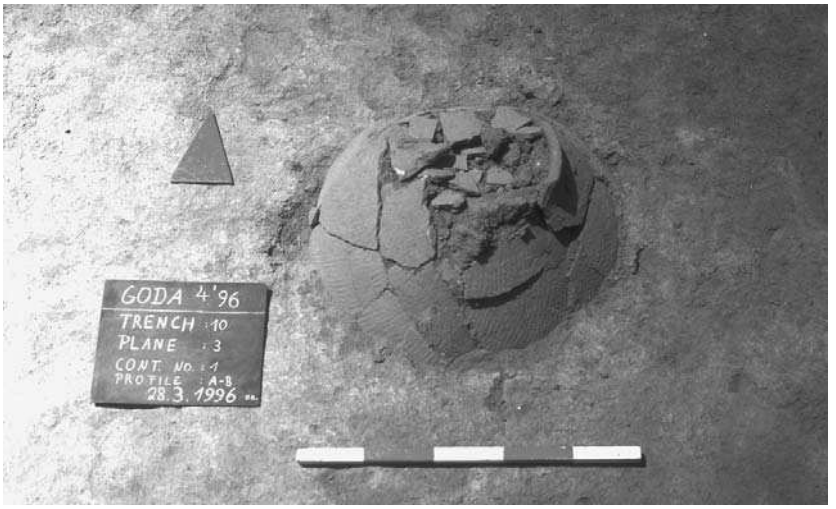


Fig. 247. GODA 4, trench 10, feature 1, section A–B.

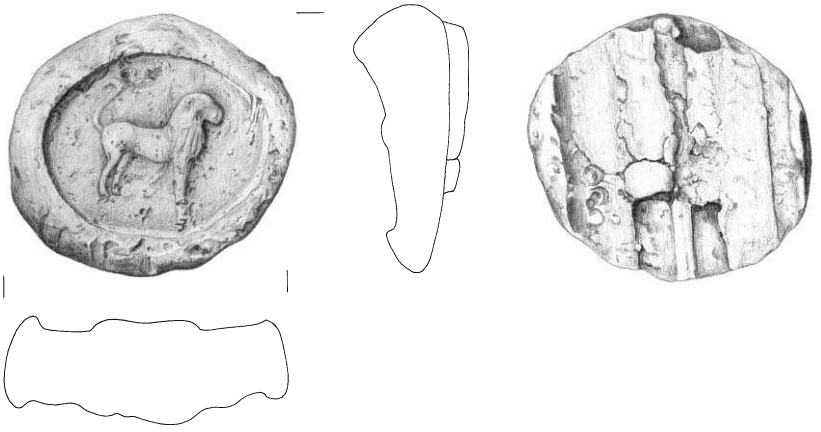


Fig. 248. GODA 4'95, trench 5, clay sealing showing a lion ("maneless lion"); 4th century AD; reverse with impressions of strings; diameter: 3.8 cm. Scale 1:1. (Kessler 2000, Kat. Nr. 215).

habitation area, a few buildings might have been constructed of stone. Metal work is testified by about 15 kg of slag, mainly discovered in the trenches at settlement area GODA 4.

More than 97% of the 1100 small finds, containing 628 beads as well as hundreds of bone, clay, glass and metal objects, have been discovered in the trenches which were dug in the settlement area. Among other clay objects two clay sealings with seal impressions representing a "maneless lion" are worthy of note[48]. One shows an impression of the sealed object on the reverse, and therefore it can be referred as belonging to the type of "direct object sealings" (fig. 248). The other one is sealed from two sides and shows no impressions of the sealed object. For this reason and because possibly relicts of a string can be observed in the form of two small openings in the surface, it can be classified as a string nodule[49].

[48] Kessler 1998, 32f.; Roth 1997, 30ff.; 1998, 9ff.; Walburg 1997, 142. The small finds with exception of the beads (see annot. 41), have been investigated by O. Kessler. Kessler 2000.

[49] See Müller's report in this volume.

From the time of C. Lassen[50] until R. L. Brohier[51] many attempts have been made to identify Godavaya with names mentioned in ancient sources. Furthermore Godavaya is designated in innumerable publications as a sea port of great importance, which was involved in ancient sea trade. Now there is archaeological evidence for an ancient settlement and the role of Godavaya as a sea port in ancient sea trade along the southern coast of Sri Lanka. Besides the archaeological results and excellent scientific collaboration, numerous friendships and many exchanges of ideas and experiences between the Sri-Lankan and German team members are associated with the name of Godavaya.

[50] C. Lassen identifies Godavaya as Ptolomy's Cape of Dionysos, (*Dionysu Akra*). Lassen 1858, vol. 3, 211 ff., map „Das alte Indien".

[51] Brohier identifies Godavaya as Ptolemy's Odoka and the Walawe Ganga as Ptolemy's *Azanus Fluvius*. Brohier/Paulusz 1951, vol. II, 24 f., pl. III A.